



Todmorden Town Council Annual Report April 2025 To March 2026

Cllr S Press, Mayor's Report

Since my Mayor Making in May 2025, I have had the pleasure of meeting so many remarkable people and attending a wide range of events that truly reflect the spirit and creativity of our community.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to everyone who invited me to events during my mayoral year. Your warmth, hospitality and dedication have made every visit both enjoyable and memorable. It has been a pleasure to join you in celebrating achievements, supporting local initiatives and simply sharing in the life of our vibrant town.

Throughout the year, I have been fortunate to attend an incredible variety of events. From photographic exhibitions and restaurant openings, to ceilidhs, theatre performances and orchestral concerts, each event has showcased the depth of talent and enthusiasm that exists within Todmorden. All of the wonderful events I've been so lucky to attend this year, are a testament to the volunteers, organisers and participants who work tirelessly behind the scenes to make them happen.

One particularly significant milestone this year was the re-launch of the Todmorden Bandstand in April, alongside the recent completion of the Pavilion, as part of the Todmorden Town Deal programme. This project represents one part of a major investment in our town's future and a wonderful enhancement of our shared public spaces. Thank you to all those involved in the Town Deal, to the Community groups who have worked alongside the Council, and to our Council Officers whose hard work and commitment have helped bring these buildings back to life.

Another round of thanks go to my Deputy Mayor, Councillor Tony Greenwood, and my Mayoress, Councillor Liz Thorpe for their friendship, encouragement and experience throughout the year. Along with my other Consorts who joined me at different events this year, their support has been invaluable, and I could not have undertaken this role without them.

A key focus of my mayoral year has been supporting my chosen charitable causes, Tod Support and Age Concern Todmorden. I am delighted that, together, we have raised £2,510.56 through a range of activities including quizzes, Christmas events and my Civic Service. This amount will be split equally between the 2 organisations. I would like to thank everyone who organised, attended and contributed to these events. Your kindness and generosity will have a lasting impact on the important work that Tod Support and Age Concern carry out.

As my mayoral year comes to an end, I reflect on all that has been achieved and with deep gratitude to everyone who has made this journey so meaningful. It has been an honour to represent such an incredible community.

Resources Committee

Cllr. B Jancovich, Chair of the Resources Committee

1. Number of Resources Committee Meetings

There were 10 meeting of Resources Committee between 1st April 2025 and 31st March 2026.

2. Number of Grants Awarded

There were 19 grants awarded under our discretionary grants award scheme, to local groups and organisations totalling £118,209.30. These grants include awards made to the Todmorden Information Centre of £13,000 to help with core funding provision, and to the Police Commissioner of £47,417 in respect of an additional 2 PCSO's (50/50 funded), £10,000 towards Todmorden In Bloom, £10,000 towards the 2 main foodbanks within Todmorden and £1,500 to CROWs.

3. Projects Delivery

3.1 The Town Council has continued with the challenging responsibility of acting as Sponsor to the Town Deal Centre Vale Park projects. In this role the Council has completed the renovation of the Bandstand, a rebuild of the Bowling Pavilion, and the refurbishment of the Tennis courts.

3.2 The Town Council is working with volunteers from a range of groups to help these Town Deal projects in the park come to fruition. As needed the Council has been working with the groups to attract external grant funds, to then oversee and project manage construction and then, on completion, to support each group in assuming operational and financial responsibility for ongoing delivery.

4. Governance, Finance and Transparency

4.1 The Councils financial position continues to be considered at every meeting of the Resources Committee, together with reviews of the forecast end of year position so that Members can prudently manage additional spend requests to the budget as set out at year start.

4.2 Financial provision has been made to enable some improvement works to be carried out Vale Land and for the renovation/upgrading of benches around the town. Both of these projects had to be held back as other time critical project opportunities arose during the year, however they will now be progressed in 2026/27. The Council have also placed its grounds Maintenance contract.

4.3 Governance and Financial Management remains strong. All policy documents were reviewed in civic year and our governance and financial management will have been subject to both internal and external audit scrutiny as part of in year and end of year processes.

4.4 As can be seen from the financial report accompanying this overall annual report, the Town Council's financial position remains robust and able to deal with its known commitments.

4.5 All financial reports, minutes of decision making and details of all payments made are available to view on the Town Councils website, as are all statutory returns.

5. Enabling others

In addition to awarding several discretionary grants to enable the work of voluntary groups within the town we have continued with our work as Sponsor of the Town Deal Centre Vale park Projects.

6. Town Deal Sponsor – Centre Vale Park Projects

During this last financial year the Town Council in its role as "Sponsor" for the Centre Vale Park project funded under the Town Deal initiative, has not only overseen the removal by Calderdale MBC of the Conservatory and upgrade to the Peace Gardens and delivery of the retrofit heating improvements undertaken at Fielden Hall, but also direct delivery of the renovation of the Bandstand and demolition of the old Bowling Pavilion (structurally unsound), replaced with a new Pavilion better suited to the ambitions of the Bowling Club as well as providing an opportunity for further community use. Whilst both the Bandstand and Pavilion experienced both unforeseen and unacceptable delays, it was important to ensure that during both construction projects, that quality was not compromised and that use of material specifications were followed.

During the year the Town Council continued to work with the Bandstand Group and Todmorden Bowling Club, with arrangements in place for both sets of volunteers to actively participate in how these facilities are used for the future.

There are two remaining projects to be delivered by Calderdale MBC – Tennis Court floodlighting and a new floodlit "Playzone" - to be built in the existing outdoor gym area, which will be relocated within the park. Calderdale MBC has secured grant funding from the Football Foundation to take forward the Playzone, with the Town Council under its "Sponsor" role, allocating £150,000 for matched contributions towards both of these projects.

It is anticipated that both projects will be delivered within the next 6 months to 12 months, but this does rely on when the Football Foundation appoints contractors to commence works on the ground. Whilst the Town Council will finish its role as Sponsor when all of the final payments have been made/allocated and an audit completed; the Town Council has had to meet significant challenges along the way.

Securing c£500,000 of additional funding was challenging whilst requiring an entirely new power supply, securing Environmental Agency Permits for building in high-risk flood zone area, securing planning permission for a redesign of the Pavilion affected severely by unstable ground conditions, all added time to the practical delivery of these projects.

None of this would have been possible if the Town Council had not been prepared to take on legal ownership and responsibility for the Bandstand and the Pavilion, including future maintenance responsibility and the oversight role as "Sponsor". By doing so the Town Council will have enabled overall some c£2,250,000 to have been invested into Centre Vale Park.

Development Committee

Cllr. Steve Martin, Chair of the Development Committee

1. Number of Development Committee Meetings

There were twelve meetings of the Development Committee between 1st April 2025 and 31st March 2026

2. Number of Planning Applications Consulted on

The Development Committee was consulted by Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council on 103 planning applications during the year. The Committee ensured consideration of the adopted Todmorden Neighbourhood Plan when acting as statutory consultee on applications.

3. Participation in Other Consultations

As well as being consulted on planning applications, the Development Committee has been consulted on the following:

- Mass Transit in West Yorkshire
- Calderdale Council Public Spaces Protection Order
- Calderdale Council Energy Efficiency and Generation Development Plan
- Assets of Community Value
- Calderdale Council Open Space, Sport and Recreation SPD
- Warland Farm Woodland Creation

Climate Emergency Committee

Cllr May Molteno, Chair of the Climate Emergency Committee

1. Number of Climate Emergency Meetings

There were 4 meetings of the Climate Emergency Committee between 1st April 2025 and 31st March 2026

2. Number of Grants Awarded

There were 3 grants awarded under the Climate Grants award scheme, to local groups and organisations totalling £4,290.04.

3. Initial projects

2.1 The Climate Emergency Committee's work has been primarily focused on the engaging with the community on environmental projects.

2.2 Over the past year, progress has also been made with establishing links with local voluntary-based groups and organisations whose work aligns with climate change mitigation and improvement of the local environment, as well as keeping abreast of similar efforts of neighbouring local authorities. The Committee

is grateful for the collaboration and support from such groups and external organisations, and looks to continue promoting and supporting their work, and building upon existing relationships.

2.3 The Committee ran a very successful Climate Assembly inviting all representatives of local environmental community groups to meet and discuss their projects and look into any issues that the council maybe able to help with. They also worked in partnership with the College for a weekend event Todmorden Tomorrow, a public event about retrofitting.

2.4 Members ran a very successful tree initiative called 'My Tree Promise' for the third year running which saw 100 fruit trees, with a pot and peat free compost given to residents within Todmorden and has agreed to continue to run this as an annual initiative.

4. Marketing

To ensure as many people as possible know about the work of Todmorden Town Council's Climate Emergency Committee to date, funding opportunities for small scale climate projects, and how to get involved in local climate efforts, including pledge participation the Committee puts articles in the Council newsletter and more coverage on the Council's social media.

Staffing Committee

Cllr Mary Carrigan, Chair of the Staffing Committee

1. Number of Staffing Committee Meetings

This Committee convenes on an 'as and when needed' basis. During this year it met on 2 occasion to consider staffing and related issues that have arisen.

2 Appointments

The Town Council has not recruited any additional staff this year but have had some changes to the teams' current roles due to taking on more responsibilities as a Town Council in regard to taking on venues – Bandstand/Pavilion.

However, the Council is about to start recruitment for fix termed cover for the Community and Events Officer.

3 Policy Work

3.1 Due to the workload handled by the small office team, staffing policy reviews, which were planned, were only partially conducted as intended. The additional reviews will now be reassessed in 2026/27.

3.2 Formal staffing appraisals were last conducted in September/October 2025, coinciding with a review of job roles. All staff received highly positive appraisals.

Community Outreach Report

Becca Toop, Community Support Officer for Todmorden Town Council

1. Vale Community Garden

Having had such a successful growing season last year, we are excited to see how the garden develops this year! We held a public winter celebration, looking back over what we have achieved in the last year, and planning ahead for the coming year.

The Town Council has purchased two additional raised beds to increase the growing space, as well as donating two fruit trees from the 'My Tree Promise' scheme. We have also had several additional fruit bushes donated by the community, so it's great to see it expanding! We have received some great donations of seeds, so are growing some vegetables people have never tried before such as kohlrabi.

The best news is that the group is now constituted and has a very competent committee to take on the management of the garden, with ongoing support from myself as Community Support Officer. They are in the process of setting up a bank account, at which point they will be recruiting paying members (£2 a year!) and applying for funding to further some of their aims, such as becoming self-sufficient for watering, and improving the biodiversity of the area.

They will also be getting involved in the Great Get Together again this September, hopefully with another community workshop to get people involved in the garden.

2. Bandstand

The Bandstand launch event was a huge success, with over a thousand people attending and a really positive atmosphere! We have had some great feedback forms returned, expressing support for having restored a heritage building, and every person that completed a feedback form said the event made them feel more connected to their community.

A few comments from the feedback forms:

"It's was lovely to be part of a diverse cross-generational crowd who were all enjoying the event"

"It was fantastic! Great line up, vibe and organisation"

"The community connection was fantastic - I feel so much more welcome in this town."

The Bandstand Group were key in organising the artists for the launch event, and are currently building their capacity to enable them to run their own events from the Bandstand, hopefully on a regular basis! A website has been launched for the Bandstand (www.todbandstand.org), and social media pages, and we are welcoming bookings. We have 7 bookings already, with many more showing an interest in booking in the future, including Tod High School!

We have also been busy creating a heritage audiowalk that celebrates Todmorden's heritage – we worked with students from Tod High School who interviewed local residents to record their stories and memories, which can then be listened to as you walk around Centre Vale Park. We also ran a poster design competition at the school to advertise the audiowalk (with some very impressive entries!).

We are in the process of editing the audio to put it onto an app, and will be launching this with a series of guided walks open to the public, after which the app will be available for anyone to download and listen to the audiowalk. This should be a great resource for Todmorden, for many years to come. Watch this space!

3. Pavilion

The Todmorden Bowls Club have now been given access to the Pavilion, and have enjoyed their first few events from it! They have also begun to use the new greens maintenance equipment that we purchased for them, and have a team of volunteers that have stepped up to support this.

There are ongoing concerns around vandalism of the greens, however we are exploring interventions with the Club, and are hopeful that increased use of the Pavilion, the building of the Playzone that will give people somewhere to play football, and some community outreach sessions will have a positive impact on how much care the public will take over the greens.

The club has several opportunities to get the community more involved, in addition to their regular 'Social Bowling for Beginners' sessions, they hope to run a session as part of an upcoming Youth Festival in the park, and have ideas to run inclusive sessions for big events such as the Carnival and Country Fair.

The Pavilion has a new page on our website with a booking platform, and we welcome bookings – particularly from community groups!

4. The Old Library, Cornholme

We have been supporting the Old Library with their ongoing community efforts, such as supporting their Open Day in November and supporting with the creation of their new website.

We have also coordinated a collaboration between the Old Library, Staying Well and the Personalised Care Team, to start up a monthly Community Cafe which should hopefully be getting off the ground soon! This will enable regular outreach sessions in a relaxed environment, and act as a point of contact for many health and wellbeing organisations

to support the community in Cornholme directly, as well as providing food (on a 'pay as you feel basis') - what's not to like!

5. Youth Engagement

Support for the Todmorden Youth Matters forum has been ongoing. The initial funding bid was unsuccessful, however they have since become a constituted group and received funding to run a Youth Festival in Centre Vale Park, which will also utilise our beautiful new buildings – the Bandstand and the Pavilion!

The long-term aim is still to develop robust and sustainable youth provision in Todmorden, based on consultation with young people to ensure that what is being developed is what is needed by them.

6. Direct Community Support

We continue to provide direct support to our local community, including support accessing funding (both internal and external), advising on governance issues, and promoting events and opportunities from local groups on our social media channels.

The Volunteering Fair that will be held in June (organised by the Climate Emergency Committee) will be an excellent opportunity to showcase all the brilliant voluntary work that takes place in our town, and support groups to recruit additional volunteers.