

# Lichfield City Council

Donegal House, Bore Street, Lichfield, WS13 6LU



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## Annual Report 2024-25

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## Introduction

As we reach the end of this civic year, we are pleased to look back on a period where your City Council has been actively working to uplift and empower our local community. The past twelve months have seen meaningful progress.

Our Back to School Bank operated across three different locations in Lichfield, ensuring families could access essential items of school clothing and stopping items from going to landfill. We also continued our programme of free summer activities for young people, helping to ensure inclusive opportunities during the school holidays.

Our climate work has seen further progress, with new wildflower planting increasing biodiversity and ecological value across the city. The installation of a new cycle station on Pool Walk supports active travel as part of our wider sustainability agenda.

Works continued at Darwin Hall to ensure its long-term viability, with maintenance and funding solutions in development to keep it open and accessible.

This year also saw meaningful cultural and civic achievements, including the installation of a new blue plaque in honour of Daisy Shaw, celebrating her contribution to our history. In 1927, Shaw broke a glass ceiling by becoming Lichfield's first female Mayor. We marked International Women's Day with an inspiring event at the Guildhall, underscoring our ongoing commitment to inclusion. At the Samuel Johnson Birthplace Museum, visitor numbers continue to grow.

Looking ahead, councillors will be supporting a city-wide school competition to design and build a bug hotel—part of our commitment to engaging young people in environmental action. Work is also beginning to commercialise the Guildhall, with the aim of reducing its financial burden on the Council while making full use of this iconic space.

It has been a busy and productive year. We close by offering our sincere thanks to our fellow councillors for their commitment and challenge, and most importantly to the dedicated officers and employees of the Council, whose work underpins all our achievements.



Councillor Jacob Marshall  
Council Leader 2025/26



Councillor Claire Pinder-Smith  
Mayor 2025/6



## Grounds & Open Spaces

The Council looks after more than 70 acres of public open space, 4 miles of footpaths, 12 acres of allotments, more than 20 bus shelters and over 140 footway lights. The City Council's open spaces range from larger areas such as Festival Gardens to small pockets of land. Each site is regularly inspected by the City Council's Open Spaces Officer, with routine maintenance work undertaken by Lichfield District Council's Operational Services Team, and more complex work undertaken by a variety of local trades and specialists.

Beginning at Festival Gardens, the City Council has introduced a number of 'no mow' and wildflower areas over recent years. These areas continue to attract positive comments from visitors and residents alike. For 2024, new wildflower areas were sown along Eastern Avenue, adjacent to the entrance to the Sports Club, and on Broad Lane; these complement existing wildflower beds at Festival Gardens and opposite St Chad's Church. 'No mow' areas include sections of Festival Gardens and open space 10 at Nether Stowe. Tulips and daffodils were also sown on Newlyn Mound and bloomed spectacularly.





## Garden of Remembrance

Following the successful completion of sewer repairs by Severn Trent, various improvements were undertaken at the site and completed in time for Remembrance Sunday.

These included replanting of flowerbeds along the northern wall, the renovation and repainting of benches and railings, and the much larger project of renewing the pathways that run around and through the Gardens.

The need to renew the pathways had been a priority for some time but was not completed previously due to knowledge of the issues with the sewer pipe running under the Gardens that were the subject of Severn Trent's recent repair work; such work involving the digging of significant areas of the Gardens, the final scope of which was unclear until investigations were made by Severn Trent while on site.



## Friary Clock Tower

Refurbishment work has been completed to the step areas surrounding the Clock Tower which included removal of moss and weed growth, application of preventative treatment and replacement of gravel; 'before and after' photographs are provided below:



#### Other matters completed in addition to routine inspections include:

- **Hazel Grove:** Tree works completed to various Larch, Ash and Cherry, plus reduction to fence height of ivy-covered holly.
- **Greenwood Drive:** Fell and dismantle Robinia.
- **Festival Gardens:** Further pest control measures and bins resecured.
- **Christchurch Lane to A51 Allotments:** Extended clearance of pathway.
- **Ash Grove:** Treeworks completed to reduce height of Sycamores next to flats at Mulberry Drive, reduced Hawthorn in line with existing hedge and cut back and clear garden access within wooded area.
- **Manor Rise to Hillside:** Footpath cleared of overgrowth, removal of dead and self-set trees from around memorial bench.
- **Kean Close to Terry Close:** Work completed to Cherry tree to side of Ferndale Rd.
- **Gorse Lane:** Detached pine tree limb removed, several dead trees felled plus pruning away from overhead cables.
- **St Chad's Churchyard:** Dead pine tree felled.
- **Remembrance Gardens:** Crown lift of oak trees overhanging pavement/road.
- **Curborough Community Centre:** Replacement of picnic table to front of premises.
- **Hanging Baskets:** Throughout city centre, watering of which is funded by Lichfield City Council (Pictured – hanging baskets at Guildhall and Donegal House).
- **ROSPA:** Annual playground inspections at Curborough, Lincoln Close and Stowe Croft.
- **Beaconfields:** Various tree works to include cutting back from pathways, removal of dead wood, hanging branches, severing of ivy, installation of new bracing to scotch pine.
- **St Michael's Churchyard:** Resurfacing work completed on boundary pathway between Church Street and Southern Cross. Removal of Lime bordering Burton Old Road West.
- **Bishops Walk:** Overhanging tree growth removed from walkway; lamp columns cleared of obstruction.
- **Masefield Close to Ivanhoe Road:** Following reports of erosion at several points along this footway, resurfacing and vegetation removal has been completed.
- **Nether Stowe:** Various works undertaken to roadside trees, remove dead wood, ivy and epicormic growth, pruning etc.
- **Northern Plantation:** Following storms, some damage was reported within the Plantation; paths cleared of obstruction with fallen limbs left for biodiversity.





## Guildhall & Community Halls

The Council owns four community halls across the City; [Darwin Hall](#), [Boley Park Community Hall](#), [Curborough Community Centre](#), and [Cruck House](#). These are operated by management committees under licence from the Council. The Committees manage the buildings, paying the running costs and receiving income from lettings, but with the Council being responsible for maintaining the fabric of the buildings and larger projects as necessary. All four facilities are extremely popular and well run, and the City Council would like to take this opportunity to thank all members of the management committees, staff and volunteers.

The Council also owns and manages the [Guildhall](#), which is let for private and commercial events and for use by local organisations. It serves as a venue for concerts organised by Lichfield Arts and is a popular venue for wedding receptions, civil wedding ceremonies and other life events.

Rooms available for hire range from small meeting rooms with a capacity of 25, the Guildroom on the ground floor with a capacity of 70, and the centrepiece of the building, the magnificent Main Hall. The Main Hall is 26 metres long and 7.5 metres wide, oak panelled, with a beamed high roof, giving a fine medieval backdrop. At the north end is a large stone tracery-stained glass window that was originally placed in the north transept of Lichfield Cathedral in 1811 and depicts principal founders and patrons of the Cathedral.

The Minstrels' Gallery on the second floor overlooks the main hall and provides an excellent view of proceedings that is often used for photographs. Supported by two kitchens (including a catering kitchen) and stair and lift access, the Guildhall is a jewel in the crown of the City of Lichfield that is available to hire either on a 'per room' basis or for whole building bookings.

The first Open Day at the Guildhall was held on Saturday 1 March and proved to be a great success, attracting over 300 people. All rooms were open to the public and set up to highlight the facilities on offer, and as always the old prison cells proved to be a great attraction. The Main Hall was elegantly dressed for a Wedding ceremony and reception.



Special thanks are recorded here to two local companies who provided their services free of charge; *Design Elegance* dressed the main hall with chair covers and place settings and local chef, *Steve Stack* from *Gourmet Chef to Go* who donated delicious canapés for visitors to enjoy. Historian Johnatan Oates gave an interesting talk to around 40 people on the history of the Guildhall.

The feedback from all those who attended was overwhelmingly positive, with many commenting how versatile the facilities at the Guildhall are. It is hoped that further open days can take place later in the year.

A [new 3D tour](#) of the Guildhall has been completed that allows potential hirers, or those just curious about one of Lichfield's most prominent historic buildings, to explore it more fully.

A number of options are available for hire of part or all of the building, including a headline £1,750 'special event' package that includes hire of the whole building on an exclusive basis from 10am to 1am, a bar provision for up to six hours and Security Industry Authority (SIA) registered security staff. If you would like to find out more about hiring the Guildhall, please visit the [City Council's website](#) or email [GHbookings@lichfield.gov.uk](mailto:GHbookings@lichfield.gov.uk)





## Samuel Johnson Birthplace Museum

During the 2024/25 period, the [Samuel Johnson Birthplace Museum](#) welcomed 19,012 visitors - an 8% increase compared to the previous year (2023/24). Both combined sales and admissions have seen a 7% increase, while donations have experienced a remarkable 27% growth. These positive outcomes have been achieved despite a brief closure at the beginning of the financial year for essential building work.

### Workforce Updates

Francesca Benson was appointed to the position of Museum Support Officer (MSO) and commenced her role at the Birthplace in April 2024. She is currently pursuing a Masters in Museum Studies at the University of Leicester.

### Enhancing Brand Identity and Digital Experience

The team has been focused on refreshing the Birthplace's brand identity. In May 2024, the Birthplace introduced a new logo designed by Vertigo. The logo embodies a timeless yet contemporary aesthetic, ensuring versatility across various platforms. It was created to be adaptable for both marketing and commercial retail products.



**SAMUEL JOHNSON**  
BIRTHPLACE MUSEUM

In addition, Vertigo also developed new exterior A-frames and door signage to further promote the Museum and Bookshop. The striking blue signage not only boosts street visibility but also reinforces the updated brand identity.

A new website, designed by Vision ICT, was launched at the end of March 2025. Featuring a modern, user-friendly design, the site offers an enhanced experience with updated content and visitor information. Fully accessible and responsive across all devices, the new site strengthens the Birthplace's digital presence and makes it easier for users to engage with and explore what the museum offers.



### Support Through Donations

A new eye-catching donations box has been installed with accompanying signage. Equipped with a self-service contactless card terminal, it allows visitors to donate easily via both cash and digital payments. Additionally, the new website now features dedicated pages to promote online donations and legacy contributions, further supporting our fundraising efforts.

### Museum Displays

Unightly screens were removed from the attic rooms, revealing the building's original structure and enhancing site security. Custom-built freestanding plinths with protective barriers were installed to improve both the display of furniture and the security of the objects. Additionally, the plinth in Attic Room Four was designed to bridge the gap leading to the staircase below, significantly improving safety.





In 1708, bookseller Michael Johnson and his wife, Sarah, moved into the building on Breadmarket Street, which now houses the Birthplace Museum. Michael operated his shop and bound books here until his death in 1731. Utilising Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding, the Workroom was redecorated and reimagined to recreate Michael's book bindery.

Visitors now step into Michael's working environment and explore the tools and equipment he and his apprentices may have used. This project was made possible through the meticulous research conducted by Arthur Green of Green's Books Ltd, who sourced and arranged the rare equipment on display. Museum designer Vertigo expertly brought the Workroom to life, evoking the sense that Michael Johnson has just put down his tools and stepped out. The room includes a new interpretation panel and hands-on quill pen and stamp interactive.





## Bookshop and retail developments

As part of the team's ongoing efforts to enhance the visitor experience and increase revenue, significant improvements have been made to the Bookshop. The space was redesigned to encourage longer dwell times and create a more inviting shopping environment. The room was redecorated, the floor rewaxed, and the much-loved grandfather clock relocated to a more prominent position, creating a warmer, more engaging atmosphere for visitors.

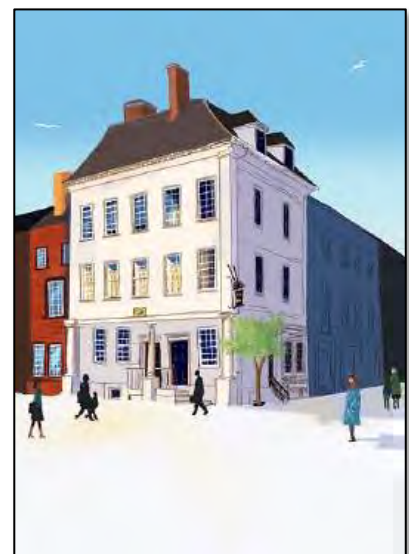
The team collaborated with Sculpt Design Ltd, a respected design firm with experience on projects for the National Trust, Ikon Gallery, Coffin Works, and Compton Verney. Together, they developed and implemented a design that enhanced both the aesthetic and functional appeal of the space, while reusing and recycling existing items where possible.

To further enhance the shopping experience, a custom-designed central display unit has been installed, providing essential storage while offering a larger and more impactful area to showcase stock. This addition allows the team to display products in a more organised and visually striking manner.



In addition to these upgrades, new product lines were introduced to attract a broader range of customers. Among the exciting additions are commissioned works by Midland artists, including the *Lichfield Colour Palette*, created by artist Stacey Barnfield. Available in A3 prints, fridge magnets, and postcards, this vibrant and contemporary design celebrates the people and places of Lichfield. The *Lichfield Map*, illustrated by artist Tom Woolley, showcases famous city landmarks with a modern twist that appeals to both contemporary and traditional tastes. Souvenirs from the Birthplace, including tea towels, fridge magnets, and Christmas cards, were reimagined with a modern twist by Lisa Hand Illustration.

These improvements to the Bookshop are a key part of the broader vision to enhance the Birthplace's appeal, increase revenue, and provide visitors with a memorable and engaging experience.





## School Programmes and Educational Partnerships

In partnership with the freelance historical educators at 'Up An' At 'Em! History', the Birthplace has fully revamped its school sessions and resource boxes. These updated sessions have been successfully trialled and have received positive feedback.

During their visit to the Birthplace, students gain insights into Samuel Johnson's life and experience the 1700s through interactive activities. These activities, covering topics such as quill writing, press printing, food, and clothing, offer students the opportunity to imagine what it was like for Samuel Johnson as he worked on his dictionary. In the second half of the visit, an engaging session is held in the Guildhall, where students explore significant historical figures from Lichfield. The Guildhall session delves into four key topics: Crime, Criminals, and Punishment; Art, Culture, and Education; Science, Engineering, and the Industrial Revolution; and Army, Exploration, and Empire.



In addition to the new education sessions, Up An' At Em! History and the Museum Support Officer have developed a resource box designed for schools unable to visit in person. The box offers six weeks of engaging activities that explore the life and times of Samuel Johnson. Each week features a different task, accompanied by an introductory film, along with handling items. The activities are designed with standard classroom supplies, such as paper and card, in mind.

The Birthplace is committed to engaging new audiences, with one key approach being through academic partnerships and student volunteering opportunities. Tess, our most recent student volunteer, has written a blog post reflecting on the experience she gained during her placement over the summer. Tess's post, published in November 2024, can be found on the Birthplace's blog.

The Birthplace extends heartfelt congratulations to Emma Stanbridge on the successful completion of her PhD studentship, having passed her viva. This remarkable achievement reflects her dedication and hard work, and the team is incredibly proud of her success.

## Repairs, Renewals, and Building Maintenance

The remedial work following the asbestos removal in March of 2024 was carried out safely and efficiently. Despite the scale of the project, closures and disruptions were minimised, and the Birthplace fully reopened on 29 April 2024. The removal of asbestos enabled us to complete work on the property which had previously been unresolved, including rewiring the basement and Bookshop.

The attic window at the Birthplace was repaired to provide roof access for investigating issues identified in the 2023 drone survey. The necessary repairs, including work on the lead, back gutter, and chimney, were successfully completed.

Improvements to the heating system included repairs/replacement of the auto air-vents, flue, and fan, which has significantly improved the temperature and conditions in the building.



## Events, Exhibitions and Activities

Throughout the year, the Birthplace team facilitated a variety of activities, including group visits, private functions, research visits, and a diverse programme of events. Highlights included the Johnson birthday celebrations, family craft sessions, and *Christmas at the Birthplace*. This financial year also saw the introduction of additional out-of-hours talks and storytelling events, which have been well-received. Special events exploring broader 18th-century themes, such as *Meet the Barber Surgeon (pictured)*, *Dancing in Georgian Britain*, and *How to Dress a Georgian Woman*, have proven particularly successful.



The Museums and Heritage Officer assisted with the shortlisting for Lichfield Arts' L2F Art Competition, which was sponsored by Dame Oliver's. The finalists' work was displayed at the Birthplace from 27 September to 5 October 2024. This year's theme, *Cakes and Ale: Celebrating the Good Life*, inspired a vibrant exhibition. A presentation event was held on 5 October in the Birth Room, where the Mayor attended to congratulate the winners and present the prizes.

PhD student Emma Stanbridge hosted two workshops on Anna Seward at the Birthplace for staff, volunteers, and fellow Keele University students and academics. A third public session was held in June 2024. The interactive workshop provided participants with the opportunity to engage directly with the Birthplace collection, including Seward's letters, the draft of her poem *Telemachus*, and her handwritten notes in the books she owned.

## Accreditation and Forward Planning

The Museums and Heritage Officer has been preparing for the museum's Accreditation Return, due on 1 October 2025. As part of this process, several key policies have been reviewed and updated, including those on Access, Care and Conservation, Collections Development, and Collections Documentation. Additionally, the site's strategic objectives for the next three years have been outlined in the new Forward Plan.

## Guildhall Prison Cells

The Birthplace team also manages the Guildhall Prison Cells, which are open to the public on Saturdays from April to September. In 2024/25, the volunteer team welcomed 3,978 visitors and looks forward to another busy season in 2025.

This year, the Cells were equipped with new, eye-catching signage designed by Sign Technology to enhance wayfinding and encourage increased footfall.

The Birthplace team extends its sincere gratitude to the dedicated volunteers who support both the Birthplace and the Guildhall Prison Cells. Their generous contributions of time and expertise help welcome visitors, deliver family activities, facilitate classes, and assist with collection documentation and conservation cleaning.

## Heritage in the City

In addition to managing the Birthplace and Guildhall Prison Cells, the Museums and Heritage Officer also supports various heritage initiatives for Lichfield City Council. This includes a project to restore historic city information plaques, overseeing the cleaning of the Samuel Johnson and James Boswell statues in Market Square, the reinstatement of the Samuel Johnson Bust and new plaques for notable Lichfeldians. The two new plaques during 2024/25 were to Anna Seward and Daisy Shaw, further information on each can be found in the 'Community Infrastructure Levy' section of this report.



## Samuel Johnson Bust Restoration, Reinstatement and Unveiling

'The Johnson's Head' bust was donated to Lichfield City Council as a gift to the people of Lichfield by Peter Hone, who purchased it at auction in 2017 on the understanding that it was to be returned to its original location over the door of number 10 Bird Street.

There had been a 'Johnson's Head' overlooking passers-by in Lichfield for many years. An initial bust of Johnson was installed on the site around 1821 by bookseller and printer Thomas George Lomax (1783-1873), former Mayor and an important figure in Lichfield's history, who ran his business from the premises. The building became affectionately known as "the Johnson's Head". This bust was replaced by a second in December 1884 to commemorate the centenary of Johnson's death and was eventually removed in 1969.

A Go Fund Me campaign, set-up by Jono Oates of Jono's Tourism, raised over £3,000 to support the associated costs of restoration and reinstatement, receiving generous donations from The Johnson Society, Viking E-Cigs and members of the public. Mr Oates himself also made a separate contribution. The project was also helped enormously by the generosity of local people and businesses. The bust required extensive restoration and specialist installation, which was carried out by Jones Carving, Messenger BCR, Brownhill Hayward Brown Chartered Architects, Hibberd Consulting Engineers (of Lichfield), and Green Power Plant Hire who each kindly donated their time to the project.

The bust was spectacularly unveiled from a scissor lift by the Mayor on Wednesday 18 September to mark Johnson's birthday. The ceremony included speeches from The Johnson Society and Jono Oates.

**Restoration** (photos courtesy of Jones Carving): This included an initial washdown and assessment, removal of sand-based mortar, replacement of the bust's plinth, replacement of a section of stone to the lower back and shoulder, and many coats of limewash.





**Unveiling: 18 September 2024** (Photos courtesy of Robert Yardley)





## Markets & Market Square

Lichfield has held a Market Charter for nearly 1,000 years, and regular General Markets take place on Tuesday, Friday and Saturday of each week, together with specialist markets and other community events and festivals that utilise the Market Square and Pool Walk.

The General Markets on Tuesday, Friday and Saturday continue to be popular, attracting a variety of traders across the three market days. All three markets are either full or have very limited stall availability. The regularly updated [Markets Facebook page](#) includes general market information, historical information, and photographs of current stalls. Visitors to the page also have the option to immediately call or message the markets team.

Products regularly offered at the market include greeting cards, fashion items, rugs, pickles and pies, fruit and vegetables, plants, printer ink and stationery, fresh fish, leather bags, belts and wallets, ready made curry, fresh meat, books and CD's, homemade cakes, picture frames and bespoke framing, knitted items, shoes, rugs, bespoke household items, flavoured spirits, antiques and collectibles.

On Friday 13 December, BBC Radio WM breakfast reporter PJ Ellis visited the Market. The radio station was on a "*Twelve Days Of Christmas*" tour of local markets that runs across the West Midlands.





### **Producers' Market**

The Producers' Market, which takes place on the first Sunday of every month (except January), is now an established and extremely popular local event amongst traders and residents alike. The Producers' Market is managed on behalf of the City Council by CJ's Events Warwickshire and usually consists of between 27 and 30 stalls on the Square.



### **Vegan Market**

Following the 'pilot' events held in 2022, the Vegan Market continues to grow in popularity. The Market has several stalls which showcase their independent, ethical, and sustainable producers, and offers a wide and varied range of products including baked goods, cosmetics, street food and jewellery.





In addition to general markets, there have been several events on the Market Square and Pool Walk across the year. On 1<sup>st</sup> May Children with Cancer UK were on the Square, and collected an incredible £880 from the public, plus online giving and other donations towards their £3,000 goal.



On Tuesday 14 May a Market pitch was provided to support National Dementia Community Awareness Week, with Councillor Janet Eagland among the volunteers providing information and support to members of the public.

**The Chamber of Trade Christmas Fayre** was held in November, the President reported that the footfall for the event was 26,120,

The Fruit and Vegetable stall has also been trading regularly on a Wednesday, as well as usual Market days.

On 9 February, Chinese New Year was celebrated on the Market Square with local community groups performing Tai Chi and other Martial Arts. There was also the opportunity to discover Chinese Calligraphy and enjoy dance, opera, a new year story, and a traditional lion dance. This year is the year of the Wood Snake, the sixth animal of the Chinese zodiac associated with wisdom, intuition, and strategic growth





## Civic Events

The Annual Council Meeting took place in the Guildhall on Wednesday May 15 2024 where the new civic team were invested for the ensuing year. Councillor Sam Schafer was appointed Mayor, Councillor Claire Pinder-Smith was elected as Deputy Mayor. Joining them as Sheriff was Cathy Wood and the Sheriff's Consort, Nigel Gann.



The Mayor appointed L/Cpl Molly Taunton as his Cadet, and Revd Ian Hayter as Mayor's Chaplain. The Mayor's Banquet hosted over 50 guests, including the outgoing Mayor & Sheriff. During the speeches, the Mayor announced that along with the Sheriff, they would be jointly hosting four events to raise money for their nominated charities: Staffordshire Blood Bikes & Lichfield Food Bank.

The Court of Arraye was held in the Guildhall on Monday 27 May. The 7th Lichfield Scout Group kindly helped once again providing seven Men at Arms who were 'inspected' by the civic party. This year's High Constables, Helen Winter & Richard Hunt, called on the Dozeners to give their reports to the Lord of the Manor.

The Civic party then gathered outside Donegal House for the traditional Lichfield Bower procession which featured music, dancers, local community groups and floats including a 'Community Monarch' display. The festivities later moved on to Beacon Park where several rides & stalls were set up for the fun to continue.





The Mayor led the Lichfield City Council team in the annual Swinfen Broun Challenge Trophy bowls match against the Lichfield Museum Bowling Club on Wednesday 19 June, celebrating the centenary of the event. As a celebration of the centenary anniversary, the club invited players to don their best 1920's apparel.

With the sun shining, an enjoyable evening was had by all; despite the best efforts of the City Council team, the Bowling Club took the trophy once again with a score of 127 to 33.



After the match, the Mayor presented the trophy to the Club President, Fred Perry, who thanked everyone for taking part and supporting the event. The Mayor then gave a brief explanation about the history of the challenge match, which has been played since 1924, though it was not until 1926 that the trophy was donated by local benefactor, Colonel Swinfen Broun; it has been fought over ever since!

Players then retired to the Hub for a light supper prepared by members of the Bowling Club. The Mayor concluded the evening by drawing the raffle which raised £173.00 for the Museum Bowling Club's charity fun day. We look forward to continuing this tradition again on Wednesday 18 June 2025.

Lichfield City Council's 'Back to School' event took place for its second year on Sunday 18 August and was well attended, saving families in Lichfield the cost of providing school uniforms. The afternoon was well supported with help from City Councillors and volunteers, with further support from businesses such as Tesco & Morrisons.

Generous donations were given by residents that included stationery and water bottles, plus some brand-new uniforms, purchased especially for this cause.

The Leader of the Council, Cllr Rosie Harvey-Coggins, thanked everyone involved; from advertising in local shops, residents taking the time and effort to donate their pre-loved uniform and officers who helped organise the donations on the day





On Saturday 7 September, the Sheriff and Consort took part in the annual tradition that is the Sheriff's Ride. With a close eye on the public purse and the environment, the Sheriff and Consort opted to lead off this year's Ride in style aboard the Big Red Bike from outside the Guildhall. Pedal power was provided by volunteers Diane, Catherine & Nigel.

*The Sheriff stated 'The Big Red Bike is a wonderful, inclusive charity which enables those who love cycling - but who may not be able to cycle independently - to experience the thrill of bowling along again with the wind in their hair!'*

The remainder of the event, being organised by the Shrievalty Association, went on to complete the ride accompanied by several horse riders & cyclists.

They were later led by the Sword and Mace Bearers back into the city via The Close, where they were welcomed at the Cathedral by The Revd Canon Andrew Stead, to toast the ride with a glass of sherry. The ride then continued via Dam Street and Market Street to the Guildhall.







Samuel Johnson's 315<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations took place on Saturday 21 September. The occasion was marked with the annual civic procession and ceremony which included placing the laurel chaplet on the statue of Dr Johnson on Market Square.

The Birthplace Museum was open throughout the day with activities, storytelling, poetry readings, and a spectacular cake prepared by Oggy's Cakes of Lichfield. The free slices were greatly enjoyed by visitors!

The annual Remembrance Service was held in the Cathedral on Sunday 10 November. Following the Cathedral service, the Deputy Lieutenant of Staffordshire, Mr Johnny Leavesley DL, accompanied by the Mayor, Councillor Sam Schafer, led the civic party to the Remembrance Gardens to observe the national two-minute silence and perform the wreath laying ceremony.

Following this, The Rt Revd Jan McFarlane, Dean of Lichfield, gave the blessing. A professional public address system was used once again to ensure the large crowds could hear the ceremony and in addition, New Growth Training & Event Security Ltd were employed to enforce the road closure and maintain public safety.

After the wreath laying ceremony in the Remembrance Gardens, around 100 guests returned to the Guildhall for light refreshments. The Mayor then gave thanks to all those involved on the day and James O'Hagan said a few words on behalf of the Royal British Legion.



*The Deputy Lieutenant of Staffordshire, Mr Johnny Leavesley & Mayor of Lichfield, Cllr Sam Schafer pictured in the Garden of Remembrance*



For the City Council's official Christmas card this year, the Mayor and Sheriff ran a competition inviting local primary & secondary school children to draw 'A Festive Picture'. After much deliberation, two winners were selected: Emma from Christ Church Primary School & Cameron from The Friary School. Both winners met with the Mayor & Sheriff in the Mayor's Parlour to receive their prize & see their drawings in print.

*Joint Winner's drawing; Emma Ballantyne from Christ Church C of E Primary School*



*Joint Winner's drawing; Cameron Woodley from Friary High School*



The Mayor's Carols for Christmas Service was held in the Guildhall on Tuesday 3 December. The service was once again led by the Mayor's Chaplain, Reverend Ian Hayter and this year, as a joint service with the Chair of Lichfield district Council, Cllr Ann Hughes.



Lichfield celebrated Shrove Tuesday on March 4 with the hotly contested pancake races in the city centre. There were plenty of willing entrants with over 30 contestants.

The winner of the Ladies' final was Britney Lewis from John German Estate Agents. Britney now has her name etched upon the special Golden Pancake Day trophy. She also won a mini bottle of champagne donated by Tesco Express and a £20 gift card.

The winner of the Gents' race was Will Preece from EPO Solicitors, again receiving a mini bottle of champagne and a £20 gift card.



Last of all, victorious in the Mascots Race was Jack Devlin from John German Estate Agents, who ran dressed as a house! Jack took home a £50 cash prize which was generously donated by Wynniatt-Husey Chartered Accountants, located on Bore St.





The Guildhall became a hub of celebration and empowerment for International Women's Day on Saturday 8 March. The event, a collaboration with Lichfield Arts, was led by the Deputy Mayor of Lichfield, Councillor Claire Pinder-Smith, and Lichfield City Council leader, Councillor Rosie Harvey-Coggins.

Live performances set an uplifting tone with stunning artwork displays by local artist Ilkay King. Visitors had the chance to experience the symbolic empowerment of Henriella Ellis' Helmet of Empowerment, a unique feature of the event. Poetic expressions by local storytellers enriched the gathering, and the open mic session emerged as a real highlight, providing a welcome platform for voices to be heard.

Local women-led businesses and charitable organisations also took part, including the Listening Centre, Pathway Project and Period Power. With art, music, poetry and a sense of community, the gathering created a lasting impression.



*Deputy Mayor, Cllr Claire Pinder-Smith wearing the 'Helmet of Empowerment'*

On Friday 14 March, the Arthur Price School Speaking Competition was held in the Guildhall, marking the 31<sup>st</sup> year since its foundation and the first year led by Dave Robertson MP. The motion was "Should the voting age be lowered to 16?" and saw an equal split with four schools supporting the motion and four against. Matthew, Joshua & Madeleine from The Friary School took home the winning trophy and Charlie from King Edward VI School won the best overall speaker award. Thank you to all the schools that took part; Chase Terrace Academy, Erasmus Darwin Academy, The Friary School, John Taylor Free School, John Taylor High School, King Edward VI School, Lichfield Cathedral School & Nether Stowe School.

The Mayor & Sheriff once again held their Entertainment & Tea event for the over 70's on Friday 21 March in the Guildroom at the Guildhall, where guests sat down to high tea served by members of Lichfield City Council & Councillors. This year, they were entertained by band 'The Commodores' who sang a variety of songs from all genres and decades resulting in lots of audience participation. A free raffle was held with prizes kindly donated by various Lichfield businesses. The afternoon closed with thanks from the Mayor and a special mention to Travelwood Ltd for providing the transport, enabling residents to attend.

During their year in office, the Mayor and Sheriff hosted events to raise money for their charities, Lichfield City of Sanctuary & St Giles Hospice. The total raised is in excess of £5,000.



For 2025/26, the Mayor is Councillor Claire Pinder-Smith, Deputy Mayor is Councillor Rosie Harvey-Coggins, and Sheriff is Reverend Ian Hayter, known to many as the popular minister at Wade St Church for many years, Dozener at the Court of Arroye, Mayor's Chaplain on many occasions (beginning with Brian Pretty in 1996) and a great supporter of the city, its events and traditions.



## Grants to Outside Bodies

The City Council's Grants Committee met in February 2025 to consider applications from local groups in response to the Council's annual invitation to apply for funding. For 2025/26, the Council resolved to increase the funding available from £32,000 to £50,000, with the aim of supporting more local groups than ever before, and to extend its 'Summer Holiday' activities fund to cover all school holidays. At its February 2025 meeting, the Committee recommended grants totalling £35,173 to the organisations as indicated below.

No.	Applicant	Amount Awarded (£)
1	South East Staffordshire Citizens Advice Bureau	3,500
2	Lichfield Community Sports Club CIC	3,000
3	Lichfield District Arts Association	2,120
4	Lichfield Greenhill Bower	3,225
5	Lichfield District Council, Proms In The Park	2,000
6	Liberty Jamboree	500
7	Dereck Jones (Games/Coffee Morning)	1,872
8	The Well	1,000
9	Erasmus Darwin Foundation	600
10	Voluntary Transport For The Disabled	1,000
11	Lichfield Waterworks Trust	0 (recommend CIL)
12	Lichfield Festival	1,250
13	Lichfield Hockey Club	200
14	Curborough Community Association	750
15	The City Of Lichfield Concert Band	1,000
16	Churches Together	300
17	Lichfield Talking News	500
18	The Lichfield Trishaw Project (Big Red Bike)	500
19	Gamers' Wellbeing	600
20	Lichfield Twinning Association	0
21	Dovehouse Community Gardens	300
22	Late Night Listeners (Two Applications)	345
23	Lichfield Ladies' and Men's Probus Club	0
24	The City of Lichfield Shrievalty Association	634
25	Soroptimist international Lichfield And District	120
26	Lichfield Litter Legends	2,500
27	Lichfield District City of Sanctuary	1,100
28	Lichfield Pride	1,000
29	Transition Lichfield (Repair and Share Café)	320
30	Lichfield Garrick Theatre	1,000
31	Lichfield Bowling Club	0
32	Lichfield Festival of Music	0
33	Lichfield Trent Valley Community First Responders	2,000
34	Dementia Caring	0
35	Lichfield Table Tennis Club	150
36	Christchurch School Association	474
37	The Staffordshire Pathway Project	1,000
38	Lichfield Friendship Centre	0
39	Lichfield & District Over 60's Club	0
40	Pheonix Counselling Service	313
41	Read Easy, Birmingham North, Tamworth & Lichfield	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>£35,173</b>



Applications for grants from 2026/27 funds will open later in the year, but some funds are retained to allow in-year applications to be considered and to fund 'School Holiday Activities' across the year.

Any group seeking further information can either visit the [City Council's website](#) or email [enquiries@lichfield.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@lichfield.gov.uk).

**Additional Grants 2024/25**

The City Council awarded grants to facilitate the expansion or introduction of events during the spring/summer of 2024, and to assist with funding for places at such events for those who would otherwise be unlikely to be able to attend. £4,248 of the £5,000 allocated was committed, the remainder returned to the grant fund. Organisations awarded funding, and the amount of funding are provided below:

Lichfield Community Sports Club CIC	2000
Curborough Community Centre	500
Liberty Jamboree	1748
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£4,248</b>

Excellent feedback was received from those able to take part in the activities offered as a result of this funding. One example is below:

*“Absolutely delighted to have been offered a funded place for my son during the May half term. He has attended the football camps with Lichfield Community Sports for many years, which has always been self-funded. He thoroughly enjoys spending time there, and has made many friendships over the years, as well as gaining many skills and personal development. Due to a change in personal family circumstances, and also being made redundant this year, being able to send him to the club during the school holiday period would have been extremely difficult, which would have caused a lot of disappointment and upset. Due to the funded place we were offered, he was able to attend during the May half term break and spend time doing what he loves best, with his friends, which has been extremely positive and beneficial to his mental health, after a particularly difficult few months for the family.*



## Twinning

Last spring, Lichfield welcomed nearly 60 guests from our twin town of Limburg, Germany to Lichfield. This visit was hosted by the Lichfield Twinning Association and supported by Lichfield City Council. The visitors enjoyed a number of activities including a canal walk, a historic guided city tour and a visit to the Sandfields Pumping Station. The Limburg visitors included two groups of young people; a group from the Limburg pathfinders scouts, hosted by the Lichfield 7<sup>th</sup> Scouts, who organised several joint activities for them, including canoeing and archery, and a group of young musicians from a Limburg music school. The young musicians entertained the Lichfield public with short concerts at Speakers' Corner, the Hub at St. Mary's, the Guildhall and at Lichfield Cathedral after Sunday service.

The Lichfield Twinning Association hosted a friendship meal at the Guildhall for the visitors, their host families and friends. The Sheriff of Lichfield and Consort greeted the German guests. During the weekend's visit, the Twinning Officer also organised a visit from a Limburg early years nursery owner to Bright Horizon's Springfields nursery on Beacon Street to compare early years provision in the two countries. Springfields nursery has in the past taken several exchange student placements from Limburg for a month at a time.



In 2001, Lichfield and Ste. Foy exchanged fruit trees as a sign of their friendship and both councils were happy to report that the trees (English apple trees in Ste. Foy and mulberry tree in Lichfield) were still doing well and bearing fruit.





At the end of July, the choir from St Michael-on-Greenhill, Lichfield, led by Choir Secretary Ted Green, gave a concert at a Sunday morning church service in our twin city of Limburg, Germany. Rector, Revd Abbie Walsh, also joined as a member of the choir. The trip was a great success and the choir hopes to be able to build on this new relationship, particularly in acting as host to a Limburg choir in the future.

The church in Limburg was the Lutheran Evangelische Kirche and the two Directors of Music worked for several months to find music that the choirs could sing together with minimal joint rehearsal time, including *You'll never walk alone*, sung as a hymn on the Sunday morning. There was also a special concert on the Saturday evening. The Lichfield party also included families and friends and the visit involved a number of social activities, including the Limburg Wine Festival and a tour of the medieval Old City.



The International Twinning Friendship Weekend is held every 3 years in alternate countries. In 2026 it is Lichfield City Council's turn to host the celebrations. The date has been set for the 2nd to 5th October 2026. The main evening gala dinner for around 270 guests and hosts will be held on Saturday evening in the Lichfield Cathedral. This will be a spectacular venue for our international friends. The catering will be provided by 'Bistro no 19', based in The Close.

There will be a full programme for the visitors over the weekend, including tours, walks, a tennis tournament (hosted by the Lichfield Lawn Friary Tennis Club) and a table tennis tournament (hosted by the Lichfield Table Tennis Club). The weekend will officially finish with an international service at Lichfield Cathedral on Sunday afternoon. Some hotel rooms have been reserved for the weekend and the city council will soon be looking for host families for our international guests.

## Christmas Lights & Market

This year's Christmas Lights Switch On event took place on Sunday 1 December, one week later than scheduled due to the forecast of high winds as a result of storm Bert. Fortunately, all the contractors, suppliers, staff, and entertainers required were still available so the event could proceed as originally planned.

As in previous years the City Council ran a competition for two Lichfield school children to help the Mayor turn the Christmas Lights on. The two lucky winners of this unique prize were Trina Clare (age 10) and Kurtis Poon (age 4). Prior to the event Trina and Kurtis met the Mayor and Sheriff in the Mayor's Parlour where they were presented with the other element of their prize – a family ticket to see *Jack & the Beanstalk*, kindly donated by Lichfield Garrick theatre.



For several years, the event has been held with a small stage, located in front of St Mary's on the Market square. This greatly reduced the footprint for the event and in 2023 an attendance of approx. 4,000 (close to the maximum capacity of the Market Square) generated some complaint from the public about not being able to hear or see what was happening on the stage due to the volume of attendees.

In order for this event to continue safely and to improve the visitor experience, an alternative solution was agreed; a large TV screen and stage was hired for 2024 and the orientation of the event changed. The location of the stage was moved to the far end of the square, thus creating a much larger and safer footprint. Everything taking place on the stage was filmed by a professional camera crew and projected onto the screen, providing a much more inclusive experience for the audience. The introduction of the large screen also provided local businesses and organisations with an opportunity to promote their forthcoming events, the advertising revenue received covering approximately half of the hire cost.

The adjustments to the event took many months of preparation with crowd safety being the paramount consideration. The Deputy Town Clerk had several planning meetings with the professional security and events team (who have worked on the event for several years) as well as with the Police and Civil Contingencies, to ensure the Council delivered as safe an event as possible.

On the day and mindful of Martyn's Law, extra event stewards, medics and Police were in attendance and a number of additional crowd safety measures were put in place along with a robust communication system. All professional stakeholders involved are confident that the safety plan put in place was followed without placing the public at risk, this was borne out by the fact that there were no incidents or injuries. The event was attended by approximately 5,000-5,500 people. It appears that the good weather and the appeal of a Big TV screen certainly increased the number of people in the City. The changes made to this year's event will be carefully reviewed with all stakeholders in preparation for 2025.





As the day progressed and after a wet start, the sun came out as members of the public started to gather around the City centre. The Producers' Market, scheduled to be on the Market Square was relocated to Minster Pool Walk with many stall holders reporting very good trading, and two having to leave earlier than planned as they sold out of stock. For the younger generation on Pool Walk there was free face painting and balloon art, a tabletop football tournament with prizes and a chance to get up close to birds of prey.

The entertainment on stage began at 12.30 with the Liberty Sign and Shine Choir - a group of young people with special educational needs who sign along to popular music. The entertainment continued with local community band Aspire, Stagecoach, local singer Cliff Antony and Lichfield Rock Choir. Our Master of Ceremonies for the day was our own Town Crier and Sword Bearer, Adrian Holmes who also entertained the crowd with a song or two. The introduction of the big screen was popular with all those who performed; the Principal of Stagecoach, Katie Howcroft commenting *'What a fantastic day and event overall. The new stage and screen were amazing, and I thought the atmosphere was great'*.

The children of Christchurch Primary school led the traditional Carol singing. Members of the public were able to join in this year as the lyrics appeared on the big screen. The Mayor's Chaplain, Rev Ian Hayter then gave a brief Christmas blessing. The Mayor, along with the two competition winners then started the countdown to the official switch on at 5.00pm. Finally, much to the delight of the children gathered, Father Christmas took time out of his busy schedule to come on stage and wish everyone a Happy Christmas.

Police Chief Inspector Paul Finlayson, Commander of Lichfield Policing Team with whom we worked closely on the event, stated: *'The event was very popular and seems to have gone down really well with the community. Well done on all the hard work I know a lot went in to it and it was great to see a really clear plan with a good Event Team to manage the whole thing. I wish all events were so well planned for. The officers enjoyed supporting the event.'*

A further selection of pictures appears on the following pages providing a flavour of the day.







## **Planning**

The District Council is the Planning Authority, but the City Council is consulted on all planning applications submitted for the city area.

The City Council's Planning Committee consists of all its Councillors, and for many years the Committee met at regular intervals to make recommendations to Lichfield District Council regarding Planning applications that had been recently submitted.

COVID-19 restrictions from March 2020 meant the Committee could no longer meet in person, so it was agreed that authority from Council would be sought to allow members of the relevant ward to discuss those applications between themselves and make recommendations to the Chair of the Committee. Those recommendations would then be submitted by officers under delegated authority.

This system worked extremely well and saw a streamlining of LCC's planning related processes that was perhaps unexpected. There were many favourable comments regarding those arrangements and while only intended to be temporary, the benefits were such that the Chair, Deputy Chair and Town Clerk jointly presented draft revised Planning Committee Terms of Reference for the consideration of the Council in 2021.

The revised terms of reference provide a good system of delegation with comments being endorsed at a subsequent Council meeting. The ability to hold a full meeting for any major plans that affect the whole city, where there is no agreement at Ward level, or upon request from the public, remains.

## **Neighbourhood Planning & Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**

Neighbourhood Planning was introduced by government as part of the Localism agenda and is a way for communities to decide the future of the places where they live and work in conformity with the strategic policies in the Local Plan (as developed and adopted by Lichfield District Council).

Following development of a draft document by the City Council, the Lichfield City Neighbourhood Plan referendum was held in February 2018, with residents voting in favour of its adoption. The Lichfield City Neighbourhood Plan then become part of the Planning framework for the City.

Where a Parish Council has a Neighbourhood Plan in place, it receives 25% of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions from a developer as opposed to 15% without a Neighbourhood Plan. The existence of an adopted Neighbourhood Plan ensures as much CIL money as possible is retained by the Parish in which the development is taking place, to be spent in consultation with residents and in accordance with the priorities laid out in the Neighbourhood Plan.

There are many competing demands for this funding, with the City Council's Grants Committee considering how this money is allocated.

A number of projects where CIL has been allocated are ongoing, and we look forward to reporting on these in due course, but details of projects that have been completed during 2024/25 are provided overleaf.

### Stowe Pool - Mill Croft to St Chad's Road Cycleway (FP22)

Installation of CIL-funded improved signage and ground markings completed, together with edge clearance.



### Lighting at Festival Gardens

Following representations made by residents, Cllr J Marshall raised the matter of additional lighting at Festival Gardens with members of the City Council's Grants Committee. Several comments had been received concerning the darkness of the area, especially during the winter months, notably on the pathways either side of the underpass. CIL funding for a lighting scheme was agreed by Council, with the Town Clerk and Open Spaces Officer working with E-on to progress the project. Four new LED pathway lights were installed in January 2025, making the area much brighter.





### Anna Seward plaque

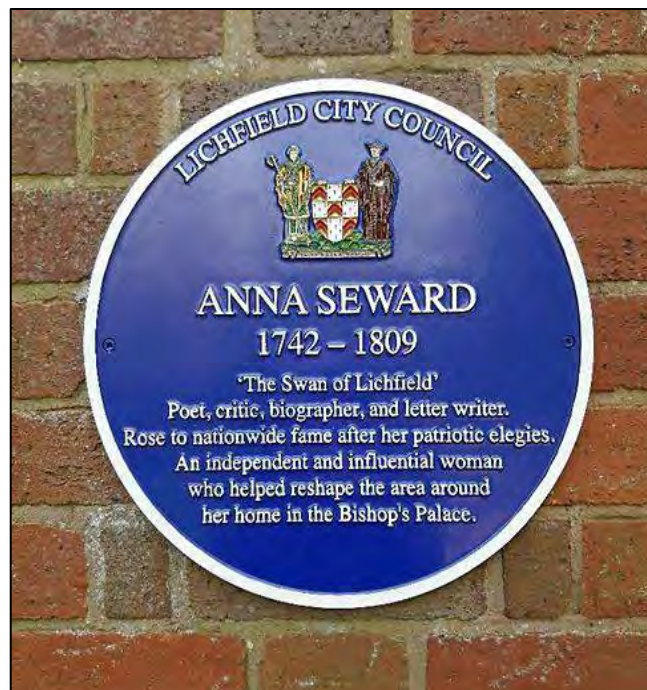
The new plaque commemorating the life and achievements of Anna Seward, which was presented in Lichfield on International Women's Day, was installed on Minister Pool Walk on 5 April 2024.

### Community Speed Watch (CSW) Signage

CIL awarded to provide 12 CSW signs at various locations in the City in support of the Lichfield branch of Community Speed Watch.

### Installation of Cycle Repair Station

Located adjacent to Speakers Corner, the repair station allows cyclists to make repairs if needed. The station can also be used to repair pushchairs and wheelchairs



### Michael Johnson's Workroom – Samuel Johnson Birthplace Museum

The Workroom has been redecorated and displayed to recreate Michael Johnson's book bindery. Further detail is provided in the 'Samuel Johnson Birthplace Museum' section of this report.

### Funding for Defibrillator

Located at Sandfields Pumping Station, the defibrillator was requested by Lichfield Waterworks Trust and funded by the City Council through CIL.

### Upgrades to Guildhall CCTV

Completion of the project to refurbish selected **City Centre plaques**. The final batch included the Richard Greene plaque, restored and was re-fixed in its original location on 34-36 Market Street.



### Hub at St Mary's – Bell Restoration

Part funding of the project to restore and reinstall the bells to St Mary's on the Market Square. The City Council contributed towards the restoration of the bells during the early months of 2025, with installation taking place in April.

### Darwin Hall – Replacement Rear Doors

New rear doors installed to Darwin Hall, greatly improving on the previous provision in terms of draft exclusion, safety and security.



### The Moggs Allotment Site – Water Troughs and Associated Pipework

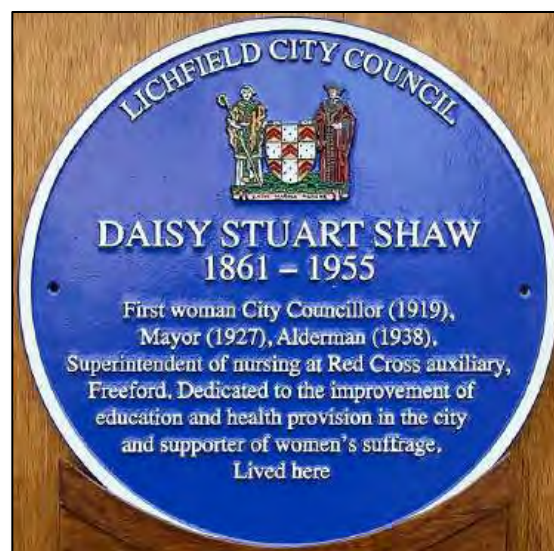
Following a request from Lichfield and District Allotment Society (LDAS), CIL funded troughs and pipework were installed at The Moggs allotment site to ensure plot holders had access to water for their plots.

Improving access to water is of significant benefit to allotment plot holders, especially those who suffer from any sort of frailty or have any mobility issues. The City Council continues to work closely with LDAS to improve the facilities at the various allotment sites that are owned by the City Council but operated by LDAS.



### Daisy Shaw Plaque

The City Council's Museums and Heritage Officer secured Listed Building Consent and oversaw the CIL funded installation and unveiling of a new plaque in honour of Daisy Stuart Shaw (1861-1955). The plaque, installed at 8 Bore Street – the former residence of Shaw – was revealed during a special ceremony in March 2025 by the Deputy Mayor of Lichfield, Councillor Claire Pinder-Smith,. The event was attended by distinguished guests, including the Sheriff of the City, Cathy Wood, and the Chair of Lichfield District Council, Councillor Ann Hughes. Shaw's commemoration was spearheaded by Councillor Ann Hughes in recognition of Shaw's remarkable contributions to Lichfield.





Residents are encouraged to have their say on possible CIL funded projects and are invited to make written submissions to the Town Clerk at the City Council Offices, Donegal House, Bore St, Lichfield WS13 6LU or by email to [enquiries@lichfield.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@lichfield.gov.uk) to assist in informing this process.

## **Electoral Matters**

Local elections were held on 4 May 2023, at which time all seats on the City Council were contested. The results saw control of the council shift from Conservative to Labour for the first time since the millennium.

A by-election was held on 13 February 2025 following the resignation of Councillor S Hollingsworth (Liberal Democrat). The seat was taken by Councillor Dean Robertson of Reform UK.

A further by-election was held on 1 May 2025 following the resignation of Councillor Dave Robertson (Labour). The seat was taken by Councillor John Madden of Reform UK.

The overall composition of the Council is currently Labour 15, Liberal Democrat 6, Conservative 6 and Reform UK 2.

The full list of city councillors and their contact details is provided on the final page of this document.

## **Finance**

The budget set by the Council in January for the 2025/26 financial year was for a council tax of £77.08 for a Band D property, a £3.32 increase from 2024/25 levels.

The comparison between 2024/25 and 2025/26 budgets is detailed overleaf.

<b><u>Net Expenditure</u></b>	<b>BUDGET</b>	<b>BUDGET</b>
<b>SERVICE AREAS</b>	<b>2024/25 £</b>	<b>2025/26 £</b>
<i>Parks and Footpaths</i>	265,053	273,982
<i>Guildhall</i>	153,425	141,786
<i>Community Centres</i>	14,335	15,199
<i>Markets</i>	2,948	3,615
<i>Civic</i>	101,307	108,287
<i>Grant Aid/Partnerships</i>	54,755	77,474
<i>Arts/Tourism/Twinning</i>	85,971	90,478
<i>Johnson Birthplace Museum</i>	159,544	176,020
<i>Democratic Services</i>	153,566	176,067
<i>Investment Interest</i>	-55,150	-61,110
<i>Loan Charges</i>	0	0
<i>Agency</i>	-3,944	-3,100
<b>Total Service Cost</b>	<b>£931,850</b>	<b>£998,698</b>
<i>Repairs and Renewals</i>	103,749	36,493
<i>Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)</i>	-5,364	-9,846
<b>SUB TOTALS</b>	<b>£1,030,235</b>	<b>£1,025,345</b>
<b>PRECEPT</b>	<b>£939,900</b>	<b>£998,698</b>
<b>To/(From) Balances</b>	<b>(£90,335)</b>	<b>(£26,647)</b>

<b><u>Balances and Reserves</u></b>	<b>BUDGET</b>	<b>BUDGET</b>
	<b>2024/25 £</b>	<b>2025/26 £</b>
<i>Opening Balance (1 April)</i>	1,696,359	1,615,138
<i>To/(From) balances</i>	(90,335)	(26,647)
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>£1,606,024</b>	<b>£1,588,491</b>
<b><u>Closing balance held as:</u></b>		
<i>Capital Reserve - Repairs/Renewals</i>	771,286	709,146
<i>Grant Aid Reserve</i>	8,789	4,033
<i>Parish Election Reserve</i>	15,000	24,713
<i>Twinning Reserve</i>	17,000	17,000
<i>CIL Reserve</i>	121,597	114,408
<i>General Revenue Reserves</i>	672,352	719,191
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>£1,606,024</b>	<b>£1,588,491</b>

<b><u>Council Tax Analysis</u></b>	<b>BUDGET</b>	<b>BUDGET</b>
	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>
<i>Precept</i>	£939,900	£998,698
<i>Apportioned Tax Base</i>	£12,742.6	£12,957
<b>RESULTANT BAND D TAX</b>	<b>£73.76</b>	<b>£77.08</b>



## **CITY COUNCIL MISSION STATEMENT:**

**‘To improve the quality of life of residents of Lichfield City’**

### **TO BE ACHIEVED BY:**

- Making best use of the resources and powers available to us to provide high-quality cost-effective services to help meet the needs and wishes of the residents
- Assisting and encouraging other bodies to provide such services

### **KEY OBJECTIVES:**

- 1 To help residents enjoy high-quality social, recreational, and cultural facilities, and to maintain or improve the standard of these facilities
- 2 To encourage and promote the economic and commercial vitality of the city
- 3 To protect and improve the high-quality environment of the city and promote sustainable development to meet the needs of present and future generations
- 4 To preserve the ancient traditions and unique identity of the city
- 5 To represent the views and wishes of the citizens of Lichfield and to promote the interests of the city for the betterment of the local community
- 6 To help to create a socially inclusive and caring community which embraces all its residents, irrespective of age, gender, culture, income, race or religion, and which seeks to develop their well-being, knowledge, understanding, and mutual co-operation.

Together with these broad objectives the City Council has several specific objectives for the forthcoming financial year, a number of which are detailed overleaf.

## SPECIFIC AIMS AND OBJECTIVES 2025/26

AIM	RESPONSIBILITY	OBJECTIVES	TARGET DATE	ACTIONS
Resident Satisfaction/Facilities	Museums and Heritage Officer	Implement next phase of the redevelopment project at <b>Samuel Johnson Birthplace Museum</b>	March 2026	Continuing work at the Birthplace to improve site access, kitchen facilities, development of new interactives.
Increase Tourism	Museums and Heritage Officer	Complete resubmission to accrediting body <b>for Samuel Johnson Museum Accreditation</b>	December 2025	Preparation of necessary documentation, policy reviews etc, approval through the Birthplace Trust
Resident Satisfaction/Facilities	Museums and Heritage Officer	Improvements to Birthplace Museum online presence and educational offer	March 2026	New website launch, further development of school visits
Resident Satisfaction/Increase Tourism	Markets Officer	Review <b>Markets</b> operation	Ongoing	Expand Market/event provision through utilising Pool Walk and/or Market Square. Further promotion of the Markets function.
Comply with Legislation/Guidelines (Health & Safety)	Deputy Town Clerk	Review employee <b>Health &amp; Safety handbook</b>	Ongoing	Work in partnership with H&S consultants to update documentation as necessary; new policies to be put to Council for adoption in a timely manner.
Comply with Legislation/Guidelines (Transparency)	Town Clerk	Ensure <b>transparency</b> information is up to date, compliant and proportionate	Ongoing	Existing transparency information to be reviewed, newly available relevant information to be uploaded to the LCC website in a timely manner.
Open Spaces	Open Spaces Officer	<b>Wilding/No Mow.</b> Explore further opportunities for increased biodiversity across LCC open spaces	ongoing	Progress exiting/new sites and identify further sites for potential inclusion in 2026.



Open Spaces	Town Clerk/Open Spaces Officer	<b>Repairs to Friary Wall</b> – scheduled ancient monument. Associated improvements to open space	Summer 2025	Completion of repair to wall in consultation with heritage England. Improvements to open space with new planting etc
Resident Satisfaction/Facilities	Town Clerk	Completion of ongoing <b>CIL</b> funded projects/invitation for, and consideration of, further CIL bids	March 2026	Progressing CIL projects to completion.

## Officer Contacts

Responsibility	Name	Tel:
Town Clerk	Tony Briggs	01543 250011
Deputy Town Clerk	Sarah Thomas	01543 309854
Finance	Alison James	01543 309853
Planning	Janet Taylor	01543 309857
Civic Matters	Harriet Chatwin	01543 309858
Open Spaces	Nigel Boden	01543 309851
Internal Audit	Graham Keatley	01543 250011

Responsibility	Name	Tel:
Twinning	Gabriele Lasch-Burden	01543 309852
Markets	Jeremy Williams	01543 309855
Johnson Birthplace	Kimberley Biddle Francesca Benson	01543 264972
Guildhall Room Hire	Helen Winter	01543 309850
Reception	Michelle Read	01543 250011

## City Council Members

Councillor	Party	Ward	Email Address	Telephone
Jeyan Anketell *	Lab	St John's	Jeyan.anketell@lichfield.gov.uk	01543 268897
Hugh Ashton *	Lib Dem	Chadsmead	Hugh.ashton@lichfield.gov.uk	07864 950985
Deb Baker	Con	St John's	enquiries@lichfield.gov.uk	07785 246391
Colin Ball *	Lab	Curborough	Colin.ball@lichfield.gov.uk	07484 819301
James Blackman	Lab	Leomansley	James.blackman@lichfield.gov.uk	07852 288877
Russell Bragger *	Lab	Stowe	Russ.bragger@lichfield.gov.uk	
Jamie Christie	Lib Dem	Leomansley	Jamie.christie@lichfield.gov.uk	07855 249348
Janet Eagland *	Con	Boley Park	Janetmeagland@outlook.com	01543 257102
Katie Farrelly	Lab	St John's	Katie.farrelly@lichfield.gov.uk	
Matthew Field	Lab	Curborough	Matthew.field@lichfield.gov.uk	07754 432653
Andrew Fox	Lab	Boley Park	Andrew.fox@lichfield.gov.uk	07817 143088
Colin Greateorex *	Con	St John's	Colin.greateorex@lichfield.gov.uk	01543 416677
Rosemary Harvey-Coggins *	Lab	St John's	Rosemary.harvey-coggins@lichfield.gov.uk	
Ann Hughes *	Lab	Stowe	Ann.hughes@lichfield.gov.uk	
Paula Knight	Lab	Curborough	Paula.knight@lichfield.gov.uk	
Angela Lax	Con	Stowe	Angela.lax@lichfield.gov.uk	07813 683049
John Madden	Reform UK	Curborough	John.madden@lichfield.gov.uk	
Jacob Marshall	Lab	Leomansley	Jacob.marshall@lichfield.gov.uk	
Paul McDermott	Lib Dem	Stowe	Paul.mcdermott@lichfield.gov.uk	07836 553512
Claire Pinder-Smith	Lab	Chadsmead	Claire.pinder-smith@lichfield.gov.uk	
Paul Ray *	Lib Dem	Chadsmead	Paul.ray@lichfield.gov.uk	07771 856931
Dean Robertson	Reform UK	Stowe	Dean.robertson@lichfield.gov.uk	
Andrew Rushton *	Lib Dem	Leomansley	Andrew.rushton@lichfield.gov.uk	07881 019010
Sam Schafer	Lab	Chadsmead	sam.schafer@lichfield.gov.uk	
John Smith *	Lib Dem	St John's	John.smith@lichfield.gov.uk	01543 257865
Ed Strain	Lab	Leomansley	Ed.strain@lichfield.gov.uk	
Ben Watkins	Lab	Leomansley	Ben.watkins@lichfield.gov.uk	01543 304282
Mark Warfield *	Con	Boley Park	enquiries@lichfield.gov.uk	01543 300934
Robert Yardley	Con	Boley Park	Robert.yardley@lichfield.gov.uk	01543 256083

\* = also member of Lichfield District Council

✱ = also member of Staffordshire County Council