



TOWN TALK

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF BRACKLEY TOWN COUNCIL

20 High Street, Brackley, NN13 7DS Tel: 01280 702441 Visit: www.brackleynorthants-tc.gov.uk



WINTER 2026



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THE MAYOR'S MESSAGE

After such a wonderful festive period, I would like to reflect on what has made my time as Mayor so truly special: the incredible spirit of our Brackley community.

This season began with the joy of our Christmas Lights Switch On, which truly lit up the town and our hearts. The Town Tractor Run was nothing short of sensational, raising more money than ever before, and Carols by Candlelight at St Peter's Church reminded me of the warmth and tradition that bind us together.

As I write this, I am remembering fondly my Mayor's Festive Fundraiser in aid of **Help Yourself**, our Town Carol Service, and my Children's Christmas Party. All were wonderful events that brought people together and helped spread the joy of Christmas.

I still find it hard to believe just how kind and supportive everyone has been to me throughout my term as Mayor so far. Every conversation has reinforced what I already knew: Brackley is a town full of heart. I would like to send my love and best wishes to every member of our community, and to extend my heartfelt thanks to our councillors and staff for their unwavering support.



May this new year bring peace, happiness, and hope for what lies ahead. I look forward to continuing to serve our wonderful town in 2026 and to building on the strong sense of community that makes Brackley so special.

Thank you Brackley, and a very Happy New Year to you all.

Warm regards,

Cllr Bernie Tiller
Brackley Town Mayor

Editorial Notes:

This magazine is produced by Brackley Town Council. Town Talk magazine is for the people of Brackley to help keep residents informed of community news, services and events, and to meet its statutory duty to inform residents of council business.

Where copy is supplied we retain the right to refuse, edit: spelling, grammar, any material that may cause offence or upset and non-essential copy in order to fit the space allowed.

Thank you to all who have contributed to this Winter 2026 publication. The next issue will be in Spring 2026. Until then, please visit our website

or social media channels for regular updates, news, projects, events and services in Brackley.

This edition is also available on our website as a PDF copy.

Artwork and print by: Banbury Litho.

A warm thank you to Martyn Parker for his drone photography on the cover of this edition.

YOUR LOCAL TOWN COUNCILLORS CONTACT DETAILS

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Brackley Town Council is made up of 16 councillors who are elected every four years to represent their particular Wards.
All Town Councillors are volunteers and receive no payment.

BRACKLEY TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS

JANUARY 2026

12th January **Full Council Meeting, Planning Committee**

19th January **Planning Committee / Council Services Committee / Finance Committee / Biodiversity & Environmental Committee**

FEBRUARY 2026

2nd February **Full Council Meeting, Planning Committee**

16th February **Planning Committee / Council Services Committee / Finance Committee**

MARCH 2026

2nd March **Full Council Meeting, Planning Committee**

16th March **Planning Committee / Council Services Committee / Finance Committee**

All meetings are held in the Civic Hall (Brackley Town Hall). Members of the public are welcome to attend all meetings.

BRACKLEY POPPY PROJECT

Help refresh the cascade for future years

Since 2018, our community's stunning poppy cascade has stood as a powerful tribute to those who served and sacrificed. Created with care and dedication by local residents who lovingly crafted more than 10,000 poppies, it has become a cherished part of our annual Remembrance commemorations.

Each year, the cascade has been proudly displayed, reminding us of the strength, unity and generosity of our community. However, after several years of use, it is now beginning to show signs of wear. Sadly, last year marked the final display of our wonderful original cascade. But do not worry, we have a plan, and we would love your help in bringing it to life.

We are inviting everyone to get involved in creating poppies for a brand new cascade. Whether you are a seasoned crafter or simply want to contribute a few poppies, every effort truly counts. Knitted or crocheted, all styles are welcome. This is a wonderful opportunity to come together once again, just as we did in 2018, and ensure our cascade continues to bloom with pride and remembrance for many years to come.



There are plenty of helpful resources and patterns available online to get you started. There is no set style or design, the only guidelines are that poppies should be knitted or crocheted, (and that we need lots of them!). We are mainly looking for red poppies, which symbolise remembrance of those who fell, but we would also love to include some purple poppies, representing the animals that lost their lives during service.

If you would like to be extra helpful, you can stitch your poppy creations together in groups of three or five. This will make it easier for us to attach them to the netting later in the year. This is entirely optional, and individual poppies are just as welcome and appreciated.

Once your poppies are complete, please drop them off at the Brackley Town Council offices, 20 High Street, Brackley, NN13 7DS (opposite The Plough). We will keep them safe in preparation for attaching them to the cascade.



Please keep an eye on our social media channels or website, as we will be sharing details later in the year about how and when we will be attaching the poppies to the netting. It is no small task, and we will be grateful for as much help as possible. The netting will be laid out and every poppy attached by hand, one by one, or in threes and fives if we are lucky! Everyone will be welcome to come along and join in, with details of dates, times and locations shared nearer the time.

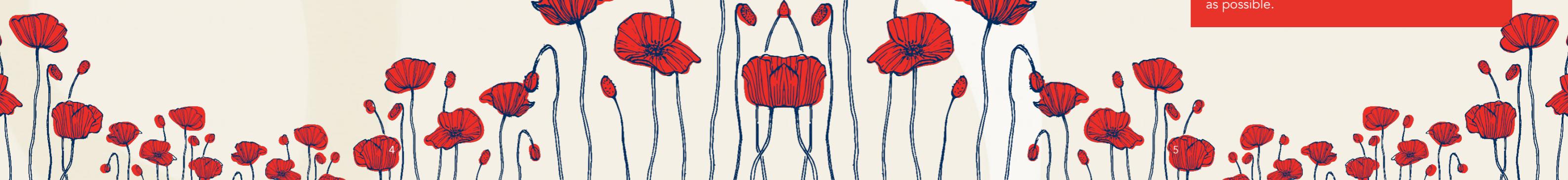
We would like to thank everyone in advance who chooses to get involved. Our community is only as special as it is because of the kindness, generosity and spirit of the people within it.

Let us keep the spirit of remembrance alive, one poppy at a time.



Need help getting started..?

If you would like to get involved but need help getting started, or if you have any questions, please contact us on 01280 702 441. Our offices are open Monday to Friday, 9am to 4pm. If we are unable to answer your call, please leave a message and we will get back to you as soon as possible.



EGERTON HALL EXTENSION

This year we were delighted to complete work on the upstairs extension to Egerton Hall. The newly created area offers two brand new rooms for the community to book and use for meetings, clubs and activity groups, as well as new space for hirers to make teas and coffees to keep them refreshed.

Once the council had completed all preparations and negotiations, work began in January 2025. In close collaboration with the Brackley Town Council Facilities Manager, to ensure the spaces were functional and well laid out, the rooms began to come together step by step. The lift included in the initial plans caused some challenges due to a few fitting issues, so it is now due to be installed in February 2026.

After much hard work from all involved, and a few small complications, the project was finished, providing more hireable space for the community.

The new rooms are already seeing a lot of use, but if you would like to hire any of our spaces, simply head to our website at www.brackleynorthants-tc.gov.uk and click the "Venue Hire" tab at the top of the page.

Alternatively, you can give us a ring Monday to Friday



between 9am and 4pm on **01280 702 441** to find out details and availability.

Thanks to everyone for their hard work in bringing this project to fruition, and we look forward to seeing you all using the new rooms at Egerton Hall.



BIODIVERSITY PROJECT

In 2025 we continued our commitment to biodiversity, building on previous successes and introducing new strategies to create habitats for wildlife. Wildflower areas flourished across the town last summer, bringing colour and life to our green spaces.

Last year, planting also extended to Foxhill's Way and Carpenters Place, helping pollinators thrive and boosting biodiversity. Residents also joined in by collecting free flower bombs from the council office, spreading blooms in their own gardens. We were delighted to see residents share positive feedback and photos of bees, bugs and birds returning to Brackley's green spaces.

Following lessons from 2024's "No Mow May", the council also introduced a more sustainable approach, Less Mow Brackley. Instead of leaving areas unmown for one month, selected areas had longer mowing intervals throughout the year. This approach helped create natural habitats for insects and small animals while keeping spaces usable for residents.

We will continue to update the community on our ongoing biodiversity initiatives through social media and Town Talk as we endeavour to foster a greener and more biodiverse Brackley.

CHRISTMAS TRACTOR RUN

We want to say a huge thanks to our local community for all your support before, during and after last year's Christmas Tractor Run, where crowds gathered along the route as a parade of tractors adorned in Christmas lights and decorations toured the town on a wintry evening in the lead-up to Christmas.

Last year marked our fifth Brackley Christmas Tractor Run in aid of the Farm Safety Foundation - Yellow Wellies. In 2024 we raised a fantastic £3,901. However, this time we smashed our target, raising much more than anticipated with a whopping **£4,760!**

Yellow Wellies are a charity that focuses on addressing major concerns over the continuing high level of fatal and life-changing injuries and accidents on farms. As well as preserving and protecting the physical and mental wellbeing of farmers (Aged 16-40). They set up a charitable foundation to help all farmers, and especially young farmers, work more safely and protect their mental health.

We have huge appreciation for our farmers both for travelling all the way to Brackley in their beautifully decorated tractors, bringing light and joy to us all, and for their hard work all year to keep us fed. The overwhelming support from the community shows you all share our gratitude.



Additionally, a big thank you to everyone involved in the organisation, planning and infrastructure of the event. Another big thank you, of course, to Sarah Boo (local MP) and the Brackley Town Mayor, Cllr Bernie Tiller, who both supported the cause by riding in tractors!

Thank you again to our wonderful community. Your generosity has shown how much our little town can do when we come together. We look forward to seeing you all at the next Tractor Run!

By Louise De Oliveira-Steunou
Work Experience Student

BEST CHRISTMAS LIGHTS 2025

We are delighted to announce the **Morris household of Humphries Drive** as the winner of last year's Brackley Town Mayor's Best Christmas Lights Competition. The entries were truly spectacular, and we were overwhelmed by the fantastic photos of festive displays across Brackley.

The Mayor, Cllr Bernie Tiller, carefully reviewed all your wonderful submissions before selecting the final shortlist. He then toured the town with a team of judges to see the excellent displays in person. He rang the doorbell on a cold winters evening a few days before Christmas, surprising the winning household with a trophy!

A huge thank you to everyone who helped make Brackley sparkle with such incredible decorations. Last year's winner holds the trophy for Best Christmas Lights 2025... but this year, it could be you!



WEST NORTHANTS COUNCIL NEWS



West Northamptonshire Council's One Stop Shop

The West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) has centralised its customer services at One Angel Square in Northampton, giving residents a modern and welcoming new place to access help and advice. Located at the St John's Street entrance of One Angel Square, in close proximity to the bus station, it continues to offer the same range of services as the Guildhall, providing support from multiple teams, now all together under one roof.

The team welcome **walk-ins**, and can offer help with most enquiries on the day, however for more complex matters it might be worth calling ahead to book an appointment to ensure the team you need have availability on the day.

You can find all this and more at One Angel Square:

- Housing
- Wellbeing
- Adult Social Care
- Citizens Advice
- Community Law Service
- Jobcentre Plus
- Migrant Help
- Northamptonshire Domestic Abuse Service

If you have a concern, but are unsure whether you'll need an in-person appointment, you can visit the WNC website for a range of information about various services including, council tax, bins, benefits, schools, transport, housing, and more. You can get answers to questions via the [online enquiry form](#), or [web chat](#) available on their website.

A quick and easy way for Brackley residents to meet with someone from WNC directly is to attend the **monthly drop-in sessions**. Visit the Brackley Library, on the last Friday of the month, each month, between 10am and 12pm.

WNC One Angel Square Address:

West Northamptonshire Council, One Angel Square, Angel Street, Northampton, NN1 1ED



To contact the team you need, simply call:
0300 126 7000.



New Booking System - Waste & Recycling Centres

West Northamptonshire Council have now implemented a new booking system for all their Household Waste Recycling Centres. We have been informed that this system has been put into place to avoid queues, ease traffic on nearby roads, and make visits smoother for residents.

Bookings are now required for all WNC Household Waste Recycling Centres, however you can still visit the reuse shops, like the one at Farthinghoe, whether donating or buying without a booking. However, if you require the tip facilities at these locations you will still need a booking. Bookings are site-specific and cannot be transferred.

Booking a Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC): You can now book a visit to the recycling centres by completing the online booking form, available online 24/7.

If you are unable to book online you can make a booking through our HWRC customer service team, open line call through Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm, on 0300 126 7000.

You can schedule a booking for as early as 2 weeks or as late as 30 minutes, subject to availability.

LIGHTING UP THE NIGHT

Mercedes-AMG PETRONAS F1

Team were delighted to once again sponsor the Brackley Fireworks, which took place on Saturday 1 November in the grounds of Magdalen College School.



Our local community is a fundamental part of our identity, and we are proud to give back throughout the year. Most recently, we were pleased to sponsor the Brackley Fireworks, which took place on Saturday 1 November to a crowd of 6,000 visitors.

We have been proud supporters of the Brackley Fireworks for many years, and our 2025 display was the ninth fully funded by the team. Our funding allows the festivities to remain the only free-to-attend offering in the area, providing our local community with a memorable social occasion year after year.



Taking place in the grounds of nearby Magdalen College School, the event, which is managed by Brackley Town Council, provided our town with a fantastic evening of family fun and entertainment.

The display was also enjoyed by the Brackley Town fans at neighbouring St. James Park during their team's FA Cup first round victory over Notts County. Those cheering on Brackley from the comfort of their sofas also spotted the fireworks, as we made a surprise appearance on BBC Two's coverage of the match.

We were pleased that Helen & Douglas House, our local children's hospice and Official Team Charity Partner 2025-2026, could join us on the night, holding a raffle with hand-signed items donated by the team. Volunteers from the team were also in attendance, holding bucket collections to raise funds. £3,073 was raised from both activities.



Helen & Douglas House commented:

"Thank you so much to everyone who attended the Brackley Fireworks. It was a wonderful evening, and we absolutely loved being part of it. The generosity of the Brackley public takes the team another step closer to their target of £100,000 raised for the children and families at Helen & Douglas House."

"Special thanks to Brackley Town Council for their hard work and dedication in making the display so memorable each year, and to all of those who kindly supported the team's fundraising efforts on the night."

"We look forward to bringing Brackley together again next year, for the tenth event funded by the team – an entire decade of displays!"

Article submitted by Mercedes-AMG PETRONAS F1 Team



THE CHATTY CAFÉ SCHEME

Overview and Chatter & Natter table in Brackley

The Chatty Café Scheme is the UK's leading non-profit dedicated to reducing loneliness and social isolation. Established in 2017 by Alex, a new mum who found herself feeling unexpectedly lonely, the scheme began with a simple but powerful insight: anyone can feel isolated, and sometimes just a small, friendly conversation can have a meaningful impact.

The idea was sparked during a visit to a café, where Alex noticed people of different ages and backgrounds—an elderly woman, a young man with additional needs—sitting alone and looking as though they could use a chat. From this moment came the concept of the 'Chatter & Natter' table: a designated space in cafés and venues where people can sit if they are open to a light, friendly conversation. It isn't about creating lifelong friendships, but about those everyday moments of connection that can brighten someone's day.

Since launching, the scheme has expanded to more than 700 hospitality venues across the UK. In 2020, it introduced a national volunteer programme, training

hundreds of volunteers to host tables and help create warm, welcoming environments for everyone who attends.

We are delighted that Brackley is home to three Chatter & Natter venues—and especially proud to highlight the lively and welcoming session at The Crown Hotel, held every Tuesday from 3pm to 5pm, the Crown's session offers a relaxed, friendly atmosphere led by dedicated volunteers. It's an ideal spot for anyone who'd like to enjoy a chat, meet new people, or simply feel more connected to the community.

Brackley's Chatter & Natter sessions also take place at:

- **Esquires Coffee**, Unit 4 Juno Cres, Brackley NN13 6RF – Mondays, 2pm–4pm
- **Paisley Pear**, Northampton Rd, Brackley NN13 5FH – Thursdays, from 6:30pm

Why not pop along and be part of a simple conversation that could make a big difference?



BRACKLEY MORRIS DANCERS

If you want a way to get active that doesn't feel like a gym, Morris dancing is a solid option. The NHS links regular movement to better mental health, lower stress, improved sleep, and better long-term health. Morris dancing gives you all of that, plus a ready-made social circle.

Despite how it looks, Morris dancing isn't just gentle stepping about. Yes, beginners start with simple dances, but there's also fast, energetic work that builds stamina, coordination, and strength. Sticks bring rhythm and timing. Handkerchiefs sharpen footwork and movement. If you can walk a couple of miles, you'll cope fine, and you'll get fitter quickly without noticing.

If you like folk culture, festivals, or just trying something different, this is worth a go. Dancing out in public for the first time is a buzz. You're part of a team. Mistakes



don't matter. The crowd doesn't know who you are. You'll finish smiling and wondering why you didn't start sooner.

Brackley Morris Dancers welcome men and women of all ages. No experience needed. We teach everything from scratch. Turn up, have a go, and see if it's for you!

Join us for practice at Brackley Town Hall every Thursday at 8pm.



On Wednesday 3rd December, all of Year 6 raised money for a charity called PEAS (Promoting Equality in African Schools) by doing a sponsored run, running as many laps around Poppyfields Park as we could in half an hour.

PEAS works in Africa, specifically in Uganda, Zambia and Ghana, building and running great schools or supporting schools that are open to all, with a particular focus on girls' education.

All together, we ran a total of 610 laps (special shoutout to Lucas who did the most laps, at 23). Thanks to the multiple parents that either helped out on the track or cheered us on from the sidelines. We were allowed to wear fun Christmas-themed outfits...including Mrs Smith, who ran as a legendary running reindeer!

PEAS worked with the Big Give Campaign so that all donations are match-funded and worth double the amount. At the time of writing, PEAS has raised in excess of £150,000, most of which will be used to build a three-room classroom extension for a school in the remote hills of Uganda. Our donations have contributed to this total.

All in all, we had a great time and are proud of all the money that was raised for the PEAS charity. We would also like to say a big thank you to all of the adults who helped organise and run the event and to Iain and Charlie from PEAS who came into school in November to tell us all about their work.

Article by Alaric, Annabelle, Mason, Molly and Wendy (members of The Radstone Primary School's Creative Writing Club)



Spend the day with Age UK Northamptonshire

Older people who attend Age UK Northamptonshire's day centre in Towcester can look forward to plenty of themed activities and seasonal fun throughout the year. In the run-up to Christmas there were opportunities to make decorations and sing festive songs. In the summer, Day Care Co-ordinator Aimie Boyd organised a day trip along the River Nene with Crusader Community Boating for 15 older people and four members of staff.

There are places available at the Towcester day centre on Mondays and Thursdays and several Brackley residents already attend, so do contact Age UK Northamptonshire on **01604 611200** or visit their website for details if you are interested.



Registered charity 1059995

Are you looking for flexible part-time work?

Age UK Northamptonshire needs to recruit caring, reliable people as Toenail Cutting Service Workers who can visit clients living in and around Brackley. The charity's Toenail Cutting Service Workers come from a variety of backgrounds, but all of them enjoy meeting their clients and getting job satisfaction from making a positive difference. More details on:

www.ageuknorthants.org.uk



SOUTH NORTHANTS YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

SNYE continues to go from strength to strength with its award-winning youth clubs, which run during term time in Brackley. Our Tuesday session takes place from 6–7pm at Brackley Library for young people aged 9–11, offering a friendly space to socialise, try new activities, and build confidence. On Fridays, our older group for ages 11–15 meets from 7.30–9pm at Brackley Leisure Centre, where attendees can enjoy games, sports, arts and crafts, and our popular tuckshop. All sessions are run as drop-ins and cost just £2, helping us keep the clubs accessible to as many young people as possible.

Our SNYE hub remains based at the former Southfields School site, and we continue to use the space. Plans are underway to launch a post-16 youth club in Brackley, giving older teens and young adults a dedicated space to connect and access support. We also aim to begin detached youth work in the local area in 2026, engaging with young people directly within the community.

We are extremely proud of our volunteers, whose dedication makes everything we do possible. Brackley resident and long-standing Youth Club volunteer Pete Chambers was recently honoured as "Volunteer of the

Year" at the NAYC Annual Awards, an achievement that reflects the passion and commitment within our team.

SNYE is always looking for new volunteers; even helping one evening a month can make a huge difference. Volunteers become part of a supportive team and receive access to free training. We are also grateful for any donations that support the running of our clubs. Excitingly, a brand-new SNYE website will be launching in 2026, so keep an eye out for updates!



BRACKLEY & DISTRICT BAND

The band rehearses every Friday evening from 19:45 to 21:45 at the Band Club in the centre of Brackley, where a dedicated upstairs rehearsal room and a cosy bar area downstairs create the perfect setting for both music-making and socialising. The Band Club is also open at various times throughout the week and is always delighted to welcome new patrons.

Do check out the band's website and/or Facebook page for details of events at which you can enjoy their music and support your local brass Band.



Facebook: **Brackley And District Band**

Web: www.brackleyband.org.uk

Email: brackleyband@gmail.com

Mobile: **07737 077009** (Nick Wilson)

COUNCIL CONTACT



Noticeboards

Keep an eye on our noticeboards for helpful updates. You'll find them outside Egerton Hall, the Town Hall, and the Council Office.



Website

Our website is the go-to hub for all things Brackley Town Council. Check out our news page for the latest stories:

www.brackleynorthantstc.gov.uk

Social Media

Follow us on social media for daily updates from BTC:

Facebook: @brackleytowncouncil

Instagram: @brackleytowncouncil

X: @brackleycouncil



E-newsletter

Sign up for our e-newsletter and receive all the latest news and useful information straight to your inbox every other week:

www.brackleynorthantstc.gov.uk/
subscribe



We want to hear from you!

Brackley Town Council loves celebrating the amazing talent in our community. You could be featured in the next issue of Town Talk, just email your story or creative works to: comms@brackleynorthanttc.gov.uk.

We're excited to see what Brackley has to offer!

Share your stories, achievements, local successes, or showcase your creativity. Whether it's poetry, short stories, sketches, photography, paintings, or something else entirely, we want to see it.

Other ways to stay informed:

Look out for banners, posters and leaflets, around the town and in the Council Office window to stay up to date with Brackley news and events.



Stay in Touch

Coils of wire and plastic bits
Imprinted cards for narrow slits
Multi-coloured with multi-tones
Modern marvels they call cell phones
'Hands free' and 'Pay as you go'
Designer models for youths to show
Status symbols, feelgood factors
In home in cars and even tractors
They're everywhere, a useful tool
Street cred teenies think they're cool
Communication's the name of the game
'It's good to talk' is the claim
Emergency, love, or just to chat
'Oh dear that long' bill on the mat
But really is it all that much
When it enables us to stay in touch.

A poem by Brackley Resident, Ray Pearce



EVENT PHOTOS!

Take a look at the event gallery page on our website to explore photos from last year's events, as well as snapshots from as far back as 2021! Browse through the galleries and see if you can spot yourself in the crowd! Visit www.brackleynorthants-tc.gov.uk/event-gallery/ to view all the photos.

Brackley PHOTO COMPETITION



We want to celebrate Brackley and would love to see the town through your lens. We are running a photo competition inviting you to share your favourite images of our town and the things that make it special.

You don't need a fancy camera or any photography experience. A mobile phone and a good eye are all you need for a chance to win. If you are a bit of a shutter bug, feel free to grab your DSLR and get snapping.

The only requirement is that photos must be taken within Brackley.

The competition is open to everyone, whatever your age!

You can submit images of any subject, from sunrise over Brackley's buildings and landscapes in dramatic weather to shots of vivid flowers, portraits, candid moments, or something a little more creative and experimental. We are looking forward to seeing Brackley's creative side.

Winners will be chosen by a panel of judges from Brackley Town Council and announced in the coming months.

How to Enter...

To enter, simply email your photo to comms@brackleynorthants-tc.gov.uk. You could win Best Brackley Photo and have your work proudly featured in the next edition of Town Talk.

CONTACT US

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NN13 7DS

FOLLOW US

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[@brackleytowncouncil](https://www.instagram.com/brackleytowncouncil)

Attention Brackley residents!

If you would like to advertise any community groups, achievements, events or services to feature in the next Town Talk magazine, please email comms@brackleynorthants-tc.gov.uk or call 01280 702441. We would love to hear from you.