

# EARLEY TOWN COUNCIL



## PRECEPT 2022-23

**Earley Town Council** sits in the tier of local government closest to its residents, Town Council officers and councillors work to deliver high quality services to the people of Earley whilst making efficient use of the council tax monies available to it.

The Town Council has continued to face significant challenges as a result of the pandemic. Income has been lost as a result of the various restrictions placed on community centres, we have had to adapt the way we hold meetings and some of the ways in which we work. However, Earley Town Council has responded positively to these challenges, maintaining a staff presence at its council offices and Helpshop throughout the pandemic, ensuring that residents receive timely assistance.

Earley Town Council will not be increasing its precept in 2022-23 (the element of residents' Council Tax bills which funds services provided by Earley Town Council), the precept will be held at £988,054. Councillors are aware that residents may be facing additional financial pressures elsewhere and are confident that the delivery of Town Council services can continue to improve without increasing the amount residents contribute. In 2022-23 the annual precept for a Band D household will be £82.51, a decrease on 2021-22.

## Earley Town Council Services

### Parks and Public Open Spaces

Earley Town Council continues to employ its own in-house team of Grounds staff and Park Rangers which enables it to maintain its land to a very high standard.

**Sol Joel Park** remains a popular site, offering skate park and parkour areas; soft ball, cricket and football pitches and a sports pavilion; a highly regarded children's playground including a large inclusive play area, as well as being a beautiful park in which to stroll or walk the dog.

This year the Town Council installed new swings and surfacing at **Meadow Park**, including an inclusive swing. The plan is to gradually upgrade all the equipment on this site. Town Council staff continue to maintain the **Paddick Drive** green space, including looking after the **BMX track**.

Earley Town Council is in the unusual, but fortunate, position of being responsible for its own nature reserve, **Maiden Erlegh Lake and Nature Reserve**. Our park rangers, grounds staff, water bailiffs and a dedicated group of volunteers work hard to ensure that the site is well maintained and a welcoming place for visitors, anglers and wildlife. Conservation work is regularly undertaken to preserve and enhance the flora and fauna and the **Interpretation Centre** remains a focus for environment based activities.

### Community Centres

The Town Council has four community centres in Earley; **Radstock Lane, Maiden Place, Centrepoint** and **Silverdale** and is continuing with its ongoing programme of maintenance and improvements. Various types of rooms are available for hire both for regular bookings or one-off functions. New for 2022-23 will be a comfortable, informal space reserved for use by local support groups, charities and community groups.

A priority for 2022-23 will be reopening the youth club, the operation of which has been severely affected by the pandemic. Although the bike workshop remained open and the Town Council arranged for outreach **youth work** to take place in the community, the plan is to expand the previous youth provision in order that more youngsters will be able to benefit. Included in this vision is the hope that Earley Town Council can build on its work with other organisations such as the local police and Reading FC.

### Representation

Earley Town Council meets regularly throughout the year, either as Full Council or in its particular Committees.

Details of these meetings are displayed on our website at [www.earley-tc.gov.uk](http://www.earley-tc.gov.uk) or on the noticeboards around Earley. Residents are welcome to attend.

Council Offices, Radstock Lane, Earley, RG6 5UL  
Open: Monday to Friday 9am to 1pm & 2pm to 4.30pm

Town Clerk: Jo Friend BA(HONS) PSLCC

[www.earley-tc.gov.uk](http://www.earley-tc.gov.uk)



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## Cemetery and Allotments

The Town Council operates **Mays Lane Cemetery**, offering provision for burial and interment of ashes as well as a special area for child burials, an area specifically for Muslim burials and a Garden of Remembrance.

There have been further complications affecting the planned extension of the cemetery but the Town Council hopes to have this completed in 2022-23.

The Council's **Culver Lane Allotment Site** remains popular, offering an opportunity to be active, spend time outdoors and increase your self sufficiency. A variety of plot sizes are offered and the site has an allotment association always ready to give advice where needed.

## Environment

Earley Town Council has pledged to make the environment a key priority. It has adopted a **Climate Emergency Action Plan** and work is ongoing to implement positive changes to the way the Town Council works. As well as making environmental projects a priority, consideration for the 'green agenda' is now part of every decision the Council makes. Earley Town Council is in the process of also adopting a **Green Infrastructure Plan** to sit alongside the Climate Emergency Action Plan.

Earley Town Council remains a statutory consultee on planning issues in Earley. Its **Planning Committee** meets monthly to consider and comment on planning applications. These comments are submitted to the planning authority, Wokingham Borough Council, for their consideration. Members of the public are welcome to attend meetings of the Planning Committee.

## Local Community

Each year Earley Town Council awards local charities and organisations a number of **grants** to assist them in their work with Earley residents. Town Councillors also sit on the boards of various local organisations and report back to Council on these groups' activities and the issues they may be facing.

Earley Town Council is involved with a number of community events. The Town Council organizes the annual **Green Fair**, held at the Nature Reserve in early August, and supports the annual **Huge Earley Litter Pick** (HELP) in April.

Last year the Town Council ran a series of small scale events and activities, called '**26 to COP26**', to encourage residents' engagement with environmental issues. On offer were sessions on bees and building bee hotels, moth identification, visits to a wind turbine, bat walks, decorating bird boxes, a clothes swap and much more. There were art and poetry competitions and word searches in the parks. The project was very well received and Earley Town Council plans to repeat some of the activities throughout 2022-23.

The **Help Shop** based at the Town Council Offices allows local residents to access Town Council services such as fishing permits and dog waste bags, as well as providing access to many of the services offered by Wokingham Borough Council but in a location convenient to the residents of Earley. These services include applications for travel passes, payment of Council Tax and purchase of refuse and garden bags.

Earley Town Council offices are based in Radstock Lane, we are always happy to hear from our residents and customers. More information is available on our website [www.earley-tc.gov.uk](http://www.earley-tc.gov.uk)

### BUDGET ESTIMATES 2021/22

Income	Expenditure	Net
		Expenditure
190,793	110,910	79,883
18,665	109,401	(90,736)
0	15,650	(15,650)
35,462	826,904	(791,442)
<b>244,920</b>	<b>1,062,865</b>	<b>(817,945)</b>

### BUDGET ESTIMATES 2022/23

	Income	Expenditure	Net
			Expenditure
<b>Community Facilities</b>	179,270	103,755	75,515
<b>Parks &amp; Play Areas</b>	20,175	99,140	(78,965)
<b>Highways &amp; Street Furniture</b>	0	34,150	(34,150)
<b>Help Shop, Grants &amp; Admin</b>	15,050	1,013,900	(998,850)
<b>Total Expenditure/Revenue</b>	<b>214,495</b>	<b>1,250,945</b>	<b>(1,036,450)</b>

## Contact Earley Town Council

Council Offices, Radstock Lane, Earley, RG6 5UL

Telephone: 0118 986 8995

Open: Monday to Friday 9am - 1pm & 2pm - 4.30pm

Website: [www.earley-tc.gov.uk](http://www.earley-tc.gov.uk)

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