



2026

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# MELKSHAM TOWN COUNCIL



# Community Development Agenda

Monday 23 March 2026



Town Hall,  
Market Place,  
Melksham,  
Wiltshire  
SN12 6ES

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# MELKSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Town Hall,  
Market Place,  
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Wiltshire  
SN12 6ES

CEO Miss Hayley Bell, Assoc CIPD, CertHE, FSLCC

01225 704187

[towncouncil@melksham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:towncouncil@melksham-tc.gov.uk)

Tuesday 17 March 2026

Dear Councillors J Westbrook, R Cleary, P Aves, E Calland, G Elson, M Drewett and S Rabey

You are summoned in accordance with the Local Government Act (LGA) 1972, Sch 12, paras 10 (2)(b) to a meeting of Community Development Committee of Melksham Town Council for the transaction of the business shown on the agenda below.

Monday 23 March **2026**, to be held at 19.00 in the Council Chamber, Melksham Town Hall, Market Place, Melksham, SN12 7ES.

The quorum for Community Development is 4.

### **Public Participation.**

Members of the public and the press may attend this meeting in person or join the meeting on teams via the following link <https://tinyurl.com/ynwxeeeky> . Public participation will take place near the start of the meeting.

Each speaker is limited to three minutes, with a total public session of 20 minutes. Members of the public are requested to send their question to [CEO@melksham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:CEO@melksham-tc.gov.uk) by noon on the working day before the meeting. You should still attend the meeting, in person or online, to ask your question.

No decisions will be made on matters not already on the agenda. The Council may ask the public and press to leave if confidential matters need to be discussed.

### **The Seven Principles of Public Life.**

All members are reminded of their duty under the code of conduct to uphold the Seven Principles of Public Life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership.

Yours sincerely,

Miss Hayley Bell – CEO

## Community Development Committee Terms of Reference

The Community Development Committee will be responsible for matters relating to all events staged, managed or involved with in relation to the Town. This will involve the preparation and management of event planning and gaining relevant permissions required.

### 1. Membership: Seven elected Members.

- 1.1 Invited officers and volunteers to enable events to be run, who have will have no voting rights.
- 1.2 No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least 50% of the whole number of members of the committee, rounded up, are present.
- 1.3 Substitution of Members - Substitutes should be nominated by the Member of the Committee planning to be absent and notified to the Proper Officer in writing by 3pm on the day of the meeting.

### 2. Delegated Business: The Committee has been delegated to deal with the following matters on an ongoing basis or to conclusion:

- 2.1 All community events;
- 2.2 Community activities and engagement including the development of a community group network;
- 2.3 Community Hub – virtual or physical;
- 2.4 Public Arts Projects;
- 2.5 South-West in Bloom and Melksham Gardening Competition;
- 2.6 Marketing and Promotion;
- 2.7 Civic Awards;
- 2.8 Review all budget lines and monthly accounts for all events;
- 2.9 To work with and support existing and new community groups, clubs, and centres.
- 2.10 Allocation of grants within the agreed criteria and budget of the Town Council

### 3. Referred Business: To consider and make recommendations to the Town Council on the following matters:

- 3.1 Budget estimates, to be prepared no later than September each year and submitted to the RFO;
- 3.2 To approve expenditure within budget and to refer any requests for expenditure over budget to Full Council;
- 3.3 To approve expenditure for projects allocated within Ear Marked Reserves.



# AGENDA

## Community Development

- |   |                             |
|---|-----------------------------|
| <p><b>1. Apologies.</b></p> <p>To receive and consider acceptance for apologies and absences</p> <p>(Local Government Act, 1972 s.85)</p>   | <p><b>19.00 – 19.01</b></p> |
| <p><b>2. Declaration of interests.</b></p> <p>To declare an interest relating to the business of the meeting.</p> <p>(Melksham Town Council Code of Conduct)</p>  | <p><b>19.01 – 19.02</b></p> |
| <p><b>3. Minutes</b></p> <p>To approve the minutes of the previous meeting 8<sup>th</sup> December 2025</p> <p>(Local Government Act 1972, s. 12)</p>   | <p><b>19.02 – 19.05</b></p> |
| <p><b>4. Public participation</b></p> <p>To allow public participation, 3 minutes per person, 20 minutes allocation.</p> <p>(Local Government Act 1972, s. 12)</p>  | <p><b>19.05 – 19.25</b></p> |
| <p><b>5. Melksham Friday Evening Marketplace Community Entertainment Initiative</b></p> <p>For decision on trial of a community Friday evening entertainment event – with an initial plan to be weekly during the summer but with continuous review.</p> <p>Report and appendix 1</p> |                             |
| <p><b>6. Meet Melksham</b></p> <p>For decision on holding a Meet Melksham event.</p> <p>Report and appendix 2</p>   |                             |
| <p><b>7. Melksham Community Support</b></p> <p>To note the report</p>   |                             |
| <p><b>8. Portable Sound System</b></p> <p>For decision on purchase of a PA system for future events</p>   |                             |



**9. Christmas Light Switch-On 2025**

To note the report

**10. Grants**

To note the report on December 2025 grants and changes to the application process

**11. Carols by the Tree**

To note the report

**12. ATB Skate Event**

To note the report

**13. Makers Market January 2026**

To note the report

**14. Pancake Race 2026**

To note the report

**15. Flag/Bunting Workshops**

To note the report

**16. Half-Term Film Screening**

To note the report

**17. Letters to Heaven**

To note the report

**18. Banner Making Workshop**

To note the report

**19. Free the Night**

To note the report

**20. Great British Spring Clean**

To note the report



## **21. Melksham Vegan Market**

To note the report

## **22. Holiday Activities**

### **22.1 Free Films**

To note the report

### **22.2 Melksham Mascot Competition**

For decision on a a short, low-cost Melksham Mascot Design Competition for the Easter Holidays

### **22.3 Park Yoga**

For decision on supporting Park Yoga Event for 2026

### **22.4 World Friendship Day**

To note the report

## **23. Park Play**

To note the report

## **24. Bands by the Bridge**

To note the report

## **25. Adventure Centre Safety Event**

To note the report

## **26. Armed forces Day Picnic**

To note the report

## **27. Melksham Festival/Melksham Fringe Festival**

To note the report

## **28. Remembrance Parade 2026**

To note the report



**29. Christmas Light Switch-On 2026**

For decision on road closure and event start time and

To note the report

**30. Carols Round the Tree**

To note the report

**31. Bra Bank**

To note the report

**32. Candle Collection**

To note the report

**33. Wiltshire Digital Drive**

To note the report

**34. Lighting up the Town Hall**

To note the report

**35. Mayoral Updates**

To note the report

**36. Armed Forces Covenant**

For decision on adopting the Covenant

Report and Appendix 4

**37. Partnership Officer Report**

To note the report



**Melksham Town Council**

**Minutes of the Community Development Committee**

**on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2025**

PRESENT: Councillor J Westbrook Chair  
 Councillor R Cleary Vice Chair  
 Councillor P Aves  
 Councillor E Calland  
 Councillor J Crossley  
 Councillor G Elson  
 Councillor S Rabey

IN ATTENDANCE Councillor A Westbrook

OFFICERS Ian Cunningham Community Officer  
 Amelie Huxtable Intern (Present virtually)  
 Andrew Meacham Committee Clerk

PUBLIC 5 members of the public were present and two members of the public were present virtually

**32/25 Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillor Drewett, who was subbed by Councillor Crossley.

**33/25 Declaration of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**34/25 Minutes**

The minutes of 8<sup>th</sup> September 2025, having been previously circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair Councillor J Westbrook.

**35/25 Public Participation**

Resident 1. Is the Town Council CCTV working and was it working during the incident on Lowbourne?

The Chair advised that a 3<sup>rd</sup> party was currently undertaking an investigation of the CCTV robustness and coverage. A report should come to the next meeting of the Community Development Committee and she would ask the CEO to notify the resident if for any reason it could not go to the next meeting.

Resident 2. Spoke on behalf of the Royal British Legion about Item 7. They were concerned at the suggestion of Councillors marching with the veterans and the number of wreaths being laid extending the service and putting a strain on veterans and cadets.

The Chair noted the concerns and asked the Community Officer to liaise with the Royal British Legion.

### **36/25 Wiltshire Digital Drive**

Members were supportive of the proposal but had some concerns.

- Safe and secure storage.
- Responsibility for data left on the machine.
- How often are they collected.
- Who will promote.

It was proposed by Councillor Cleary, seconded by Councillor Elson and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to support the proposal in principle and give devolved authority to implement if the concerns are resolved. The outcome should be reported to the next meeting but officers do not need to wait to implement.

### **37/25 Melksham Community Support**

It was proposed by Councillor Rabey, seconded by Councillor Elson and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to approve the continuation of the Melksham Community Support service for a further three years in partnership with Melksham Without Parish Council and Age UK Wiltshire, subject to the agreed annual contribution and inflationary adjustment.

### **38/25 Remembrance Sunday**

Standing Orders were twice suspended to allow the representatives of the Royal British Legion to speak.

Standing Orders were re-instated.

It was proposed by Councillor Rabey, seconded by Councillor Elson and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** for the Community Officer to liaise with the Royal British Legion to ensure the smooth running of Remembrance 2026 and going forward. Authority is delegated to the CEO to make decisions arising from these discussions.

### **39/25 K6 Telephone Boxes**

It was noted that the boxes are currently away being repaired.

It was proposed by Councillor J Westbrook, seconded by Councillor Calland and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that officers would pull together ideas and bring the matter back to the next meeting, with the community having a say in the final decision.

**40/25 Items to note**

Noted. Comments as follows

Flooding – Are we prepared for flooding? Can we put out flood information?

Window Competitions – Congratulations to everyone who entered. Christmas winner was incredible.

UK Parliament Week – Thanks to Amelie who did a fantastic job organising this.

Mayoral Updates – Thanks to the Mayor for her commitment.

Proms in the Park – If moved inside would it be possible to retain a “picnic” vibe?

Christmas – Thanks to everyone involved in the event.

Community Vision Survey – Can we make this a regular event?

Park Yoga – Noted that attendance was down on previous year. Could we speak to Devizes to see what they do to keep up numbers?

Updates – Legal requirement to advertise in press at least one a year about what MTC has done. Should also include what we intend to do.

Meeting closed at: 20:25

Signed .....

Dated .....



2026

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## MELKSHAM TOWN COUNCIL



# Community Development Report

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2026



Town Hall,  
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SN12 6ES

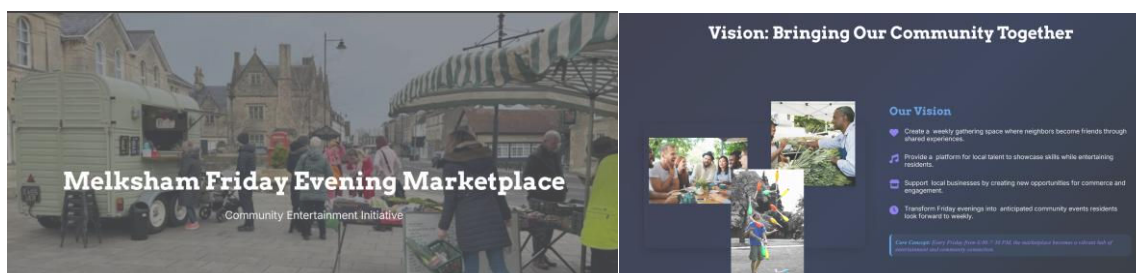
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## Item 5 Proposal Melksham Friday Evening Marketplace Community Entertainment Initiative

**Vision Statement:** To establish a regular low-cost Friday evening gathering that brings the community together, supports local performers and traders, and helps kickstart Melksham's night-time economy through accessible, family-friendly entertainment. Make Melksham Town Centre a destination for early Friday evenings.



**Estimated Running Cost ~£2000 from existing events budget community 2026-2027**

### Other requirements:

- **Seating:-** light-weight easily stackable tables and chairs. These could be used for a variety of events in the market place. To be reviewed and purchased within the current budget (unused from 2025-2026)
- **Sound System** (refer to proposal later). Since many events may require a stronger sound system than the small PA used for park yoga, owning equipment could save significantly on hire costs.

**Recommendation:** The Melksham Town Council trials a community Friday evening entertainment event – with an initial plan to be weekly during the summer but with continuous review.

See Appendix 1 for more details

## Item 6 Proposal – Meet Melksham

Meet Melksham is a proposed community discovery event designed to bring together local clubs, societies, community groups, and relevant venues in a single, accessible location so residents can explore what is available in Melksham and identify activities they may wish to join.

The event is planned for **Melksham Assembly Hall** on a **Saturday, with currently the 16 May 2026 (10:00-15:00) as a likely date**. It will feature a marketplace format, allowing residents to interact directly with local organizations. Admission is free for the public, while participating groups will pay a small fee of £5 per table to discourage last minute cancellations. The main aim is to foster engagement within the community and



among various groups. Additionally, MTC will benefit by creating and maintaining a live, GDPR-compliant database of community groups to support ongoing communication, engagement, and council events.

Costs are staff resource, use of hall on an un-booked day.

**Recommendation:** To approve the Meet Melksham event and allocate hall hire from community events budget 2026-2027.

See Appendix 2 for more details

## Item 7 – Melksham Community Support update

### Background:

The Melksham Community Support (MCS) service, delivered in partnership with Age UK Wiltshire, continues to provide vital support for older and vulnerable residents. The service has received positive feedback and recognition for its impact on community wellbeing.

This is data for both Melksham Town Council and Melksham Without Parish Council.

- 32 new clients this quarter (up from 19 in Q2); 7 (22%) from Melksham Without Parish.
- 27 ongoing clients continued receiving support.
- 52 home visits made; 233 total client contacts.
- 193 support issues tackled:
  - Finance: 15
  - Socialisation: 64
  - Independence: 24
  - Volunteer help: 4
  - Wellbeing: 66
  - Falls prevention: 20
  - Information & Advice: 48 people helped.
  - Fitness & Friendship Club: 85 attendances; average 14 per session.
  - 5 clients receive weekly befriending calls.

MCS received a Good Practice Award and clients expressed strong appreciation for its personalised support and positive impact.

### Free daytime discos held in the assembly hall (hired)

- Daytime Discos: 180 attended in October, 260 in January.



## Item 8 Purchase of Portable Sound System

The council owns a very small portable PA which was used for Yoga in the Park and at the VJ event last year (it was not adequate).

Otherwise, we have hired PAs for 2 events last year (approximate cost £800+VAT)

For Fear Free we borrowed a more professional system (via the Community Officer) but it was not loud enough for the large and boisterous crowd.

In order to run more events in the market place and at KGV, a better sound system would be required.



Figure 1 The Electro Voice Everse 12

A battery-powered portable PA speaker that's loud, clear, weather-resistant, and designed for musicians, DJs, events, and outdoor use.

The key elements are ease of use with no cabling required for most council events.

Category	Details
Battery	6+ hours at full blast, 12+ hours at normal volume, Charges while plugged in
Volume & Sound	Very loud: up to 126 dB, Deep bass: goes down to 45 Hz, Covers a wide area: 100° x 60°
Bluetooth & Wireless	Streams music from your phone, Can pair two EVERSE speakers for stereo, App control for EQ, effects, and mixing
Built-in Mixer	Plug in microphones, instruments, or music players, Has effects (reverb, delay, compression), Has feedback suppression to stop squealing
Weather Resistance	Rated IP43 — safe for light rain and splashes, Rugged plastic body with steel grille



Power & Connections	400 W Class-D amplifier, 2 combo mic/line inputs, 3.5 mm aux input, XLR output, USB-C charging for phones, 12 V output for wireless mic receivers
Size & Weight	14.16 kg, 345 × 597 × 347 mm
Warranty	3 years

We plan to acquire two units which can be operated separately or together wirelessly suitable for most events, with wired capability for occasions like remembrance. At current hire rates, they would pay for themselves in two years- or one year if usage increases for events such as the Market Place and Festival. Professional sound management will still be required for major events, like the Christmas light switch-on.

Units are priced at £1,049 including VAT, but we can source them for under £700 excluding VAT via a supplier who will order at trade price for us.

We also need to purchase microphones, preferably wireless/wired-capable models (e.g., **Sennheiser XSW 1-835-E Wireless Vocal System**) with a target cost of about £260 each. Funding will come from unspent budget in 303-4437 Events/General Events



Events by date – completed (or not reported) since last meeting

**Item 9 – Melksham Christmas Light Switch-On – Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2025**

An estimated 4000 attendees were present at the event at its peak, and security estimated 2000 attendees for the indoor market in the Assembly Hall over the course of the event. Santa’s Grotto was fully booked, with 125 spaces sold for a total of £375. The Toy Drive, organised by Friends of Giffords Surgery, was very well-frequented all the way through the event.

22 outside vendors attended the event, along with 24 inside vendors. In evaluation post-event, 80% of vendors said they would attend again next year. The average star rating for visitor turn-out was 4.36 and 73% of respondents said they met or exceeded on sales targets.

Vendors reported low visitor turn-out between 14.00 (event open) and 15.00. Opening the outside market from 15.00 would be beneficial for vendors, and additionally would shorten the road closure, reducing the impact of the event on residents and businesses within the road closure zone- see recommendation for next year A quiet hour has been suggested from 14.00 to 15.00 in the indoor market, and so both the grotto and indoor market could remain on the existing schedule.

<b>Total Budget 2025/26 (excluding lights grant)</b>	£9000.00
<b>Total Spent (inc. Memory Tree costs)</b>	£11502.60
<b>Total Income</b>	£3360.99
<b>Profit</b>	£858.99

The event exceeded its original income target.



**Item 10 Grants follow up Monday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2025**

The following grants were awarded at the Grants meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2025 and have now been paid.



<b>Melksham Foodbank &amp; Lifeline CIO</b>	£1000.00
<b>Melksham Lions</b>	£559.98
<b>Wiltshire Digital Drive CIC</b>	£1000.00
<b>Celebrating Age Wiltshire</b>	£1000.00
<b>Friends of Gifford Surgery</b>	£1000.00
<b>Melksham Community Larder</b>	£200.00
<b>Friends of River Mead School</b>	£120.00
<b>Fear Free (payment due)</b>	£1000.00
<b>Total</b>	£5879.98

### *Simplification of Grant Application Process*

Following feedback about the previous JotForms system, we have streamlined the application procedure. Document uploads (such as risk assessments) are now separated from the main questionnaire, so applicants no longer lose all their entered information if a document is unavailable. The application process also warns applicants at the beginning about the data they will need to reduce the chance of being unable to complete.

### *Automation*

We switched from **paid** JotForms to Microsoft Forms, which comes **free** with our Microsoft 365 subscription, and enhanced it using Power Automate. The cost (list price) to continue with a JotForms subscription would be £34/month - using Microsoft Forms results in an annual saving of £408. We are continuing to automate the application process to further reduce staff involvement while ensuring it remains straightforward for applicants.

## **Item 11 Carols by the Tree - Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2025**

The event had a strong turn-out from the public, with around 150 in attendance over the course of the event. Although Area Heads requested the event be moved from Friday 12<sup>th</sup> to Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> to support school participation, none of the schools were able to attend.

Seend CofE Primary School sent children to sing with us. We booked Chloe's Animal Farm. Alcohol-free mulled wine was available, and the money raised went to the mayor's chosen charities, Fear Free and Wilts and Bath Air Ambulance.

We also made use of the new "event" mobile large screens for the words -they have also been used for the lights switch on, bunting workshops, Mayor's reception





### Item 12 ATB Skate event – Assembly Hall, Friday 2nd January 2026

This event is part of the Wiltshire Fuel programme (**Food, Unity, Energy, Laughter**), a holiday activity and food programme branding by Wiltshire Council (from **HAF (Holiday Activities and Food)** programme, which is funded by the Department for Education (DfE). It provides various activities, nutritious meals and educational support to eligible school-aged children. MTC provided access to the Assembly Hall for their event on the 2nd of January, which included activities such as a bouncy castle, and scooter and skateboarding activities.

The next event will be on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2026 at KGV Skatepark from 10.30 - 13.30. You can read more about the event and how to book [here](#). Melksham has been chosen as a destination for the Easter programme because of our support of ATB Skate's January event.



### Item 13 Makers' Market meeting 16<sup>th</sup> Jan 2026

The community officer met with market representatives to address concerns about changes in operations over recent years. They agreed that establishing a clear SLA outlining each party's responsibilities would facilitate the smooth operation of this popular and self-funding event.

All necessary agreements, paperwork, and related documents are already in place for this year's series of events. See Appendix 3 for the agreement.



**Action:** Community Officer & Communications Officer to agree question about website, email etc.

**Melksham Makers’ Market – 2026 dates**

Event	Date	Day	Location	Times
Makers’ Market	25 April	Saturday	Market Place,	09.00 – 14:00
Makers’ Market	30 May	Saturday	Market Place, M	09.00 – 14:00
Makers’ Market	27 June	Saturday	Market Place,	09.00 – 14:00
Makers’ Market	25 July	Saturday	Market Place,	09.00 – 14:00
Makers’ Market	26 September	Saturday	Market Place,	09.00 – 14:00
Makers’ Christmas Market	29 November	Saturday	Assembly Hall	10.00 - 14.00

**Item 14 Pancake Race – Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2026**



12:30–14:30 Many families took part in wacky pancake race outside Town Hall, with over 200 visitors over the course of the event. The event received positive feedback and was well received.

Next year:

Given the success if this event, we intend to hold another race next year. One challenge is that Tuesday, 9th February 2027, does not coincide with school holidays. We have two options: either proceed as planned and consider targeting a different audience or reschedule the race for a weekend. Decision pending.



### Item 15 Flag / bunting family sessions (half-term workshops) - Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2026

The Melksham Flag Group organised four free bunting sessions over two days during half-term, with 25 tickets per session. The sessions were provided for free in the Council Chamber and were fully booked with around 60% attendance.



### Item 16 Free film screening (Half Term) – *Nim's Island*, Friday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2026

114 free tickets were booked for our half-term screening of *Nim's Island*, with around 70 attendees on the day, just over the expected percentage. Previously, we have charged a small fee, but attendance had typically been between 10 and 15.

It has been requested that we run an additional SEND session for future screenings, which can be easily implemented going forward.

Attendees are welcome to bring their own food and drink, and we'll be offering a small range of food and drink for a low cost.

Due to the success of the event, we are proposing to run a free screening once a week during half-terms and holidays for the rest of the year.

### Item 17 Letters to Heaven – Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2026



Melksham Town Council in partnership with Semington Crematorium and Appleby & Townend have launched a Letters to Heaven memorial postbox at The Friend's Garden

in King Street, behind the former Spiritualist Church. The post box provides residents with a dedicated space to write letters to loved ones who have passed away - whether to mark a birthday, anniversary, or simply share a heartfelt message.

Letters are treated with care: they are never opened or read and, in partnership with West Wiltshire Crematorium, are eco-composted and placed in the crematorium's Memorial Garden, allowing the words to symbolically live on.

### **Item 18 Banner Making Workshop (Free the Night prep) – at Doubles (Avonside), Saturday 28th February 2026**

In preparation for *Free the Night*, we organised a banner-making workshop for attendees of the march. Attendees (approx. 20 over the session) were encouraged to bring their own recycled material if they could, with extra provided by us if needed.

Thanks to Doubles for hosting the event, and to the Flag Group for volunteering their time to support the event.



### **Item 19 Free the Night – Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2026**

A march through Melksham's town centre in support of Fear Free to promote safety and respect on the street at night. 347 spaces were booked. Estimated attendance was around 500.

The march began at the Town Hall with a warm-up led by Healthy Empowered Runners (H.E.R.), a Melksham women-only running group. The event had support from the police, Chippenham based belly-dancing group Sahara Sisters, West Wilts Radio and Evie's Kitchen.





The march passed down the high street and then up towards Evie's Kitchen, where the route ended. Evie's Kitchen provided a party atmosphere, with music and food which was free for children. The Sahara Sisters gave an additional performance at the end of the route.

### *Live Radio Coverage*

**West Wilts Radio** broadcasted the event live from KGV, interviewing the attendees to share their stories and talk about their experiences with feeling safe on the street. Feedback from attendees was extremely positive.

Supported by:

**Fear Free** – lead group

**Still Sisters** – sponsors and organisation

**Evie's Kitchen** – music, use of stage and barbecue. Free hotdogs for children

**H.E.R** - Healthy Empowered Runners – warm up

**Light Fantastic** - Event & Entertainment lighting

**Kyle Stevens** - videography

**SaharaSisters** <https://www.facebook.com/bellydancingchippenham>

**West Wilts Radio** – live broadcast

The Incredible Volunteers – 20+ marshals etc.

**Wiltshire Police** – advice and support on the night

**Asda** – water donation

**Doubles** – hosted banner making: coffee pizza records

**Contender Gym**



*We are in discussions with Fear Free about the possibility of running the event annually.*

## Item 20 The Great British Spring Clean 13<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> March



MTC is supporting the Great British Spring Clean and invites groups to borrow our newly organised litter picking equipment. Some volunteers have already requested kits, and we will keep promoting this initiative.

The regular clean-up group has rescheduled their April event to the 29<sup>th</sup> March at 13.00 at the Town Hall – this will be the official MTC litter pick. MTC will provide a gazebo and refreshments and advertise the event.

We also aim to hold a staff litter pick, but the date is pending due to team commitments.

## Item 21 Melksham Vegan Market – Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Melksham Vegan Market took place on the morning of Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March in the Market Place. The event is being organised by Vegan Fairs with support from Melksham Town Council with event documentation and licensing.



## Upcoming Events

### Item 22 Holiday Activities, Easter, May Half Term, Summer etc.

We are beginning to plan our calendar of half-term and holiday events over the next year. There is £5000 budget approved by Council for the 2026/2027 calendar year.

#### 22.1 Free Films

As previously mentioned, given the success of our previous free offering there will be a **free film screening in the Assembly Hall once a week** throughout each holiday period. We're currently intending to run this on the same day each week, but this will be subject to existing bookings.

We have chosen Thursday as the film day (avoids bank holidays and the assembly is generally free). The first film on the 2<sup>nd</sup> April will be Hop. The full schedule will be published shortly.

The tickets will be free and bookable online via the assembly hall and council websites.

Attendees may bring their own refreshments but we will also provide some low-cost snack options for those who want them.

#### *Popcorn*

We are investigating a professional popcorn machine, funded from our current budget. Our goal is to recover the costs by selling affordable popcorn – but the key is to provide cheap popcorn. We will be able to re-use this at other events.

#### *SEND sessions*

We will also conduct SEND sessions based on requests. During discussions, it is challenging to define exactly what these will involve, since different conditions require varying accommodations—for example, low noise levels, shorter films, or avoiding darkness. We aim to encourage parents and carers to share their preferences and will do our best to accommodate as much as possible.

We will be providing a variety of free and low-cost activities over the upcoming half-terms periods and holidays. We'll be booking on with a few of the most popular activities of last year, as well as introducing some new events.

The full calendar is progressing and a few of the events are ready to be booked. We have been quoted for two circus skills events, which will be booked for May half-term and the summer holidays. Us Girls will be returning to Melksham over the summer on Friday



afternoons.

We're in discussions with Future of Football about running football sessions on Mondays throughout at the summer holidays, and with Jolly Jumpers, who ran one of our most well-attended sessions over the summer.

## 22.2 Melksham Mascot Competition – 7th and 8th April 2026

The Council is asked to approve a short, low-cost Melksham Mascot Design Competition for the Easter Holidays.

We will host four free, drop-in creative sessions across two days (AM/PM), providing basic materials (paper, pencils, pens) and an optional mascot outline template, with the option for online submissions. Entrants will submit artwork in any medium, 1–2 sentences explaining why their design best represents Melksham, their name, and a parent/guardian contact. A small judging panel will select a winning design for development into a simple, physical mascot (medium stuffed toy size).

Recent free events demonstrate strong demand for no-cost family activities in town: making our holiday film sessions free produced a 660% increase on prior paid ticket sales, and the Flag Group's sold-out bunting workshop showed that free arts and crafts are highly popular with parents and children. The budget requirement is minimal and limited to production of the mascot and incidental materials, estimated at £20-30 depending on the final design and suppliers.

This proposal delivers immediate benefits at minimal cost: it provides free half-term activities for families; creates a child-designed mascot that can be used for ongoing community engagement; and opens low-cost, repeatable opportunities, such as a loanable "mascot outreach" programme for schools and youth groups (with a diary/photos to showcase their work, a fun and easy way to promote the work of local groups) and a potential annual Halloween costume competition during October half-term. If successful, the activity could become a recurring feature of the calendar with modest, predictable costs and strong visibility for Melksham's community life.



**MELKSHAM TOWN  
COUNCIL**

## 22.3 Park Yoga

Plans are currently being finalised for the summer. Last year MTC received co-funding but this year the programme costs will fall to MTC. Park Yoga **is a registered UK charity** (charity number **1183253** CIC). They propose to become self-funding by 2028.

### *Delivery model*

- **20 weeks, Sunday mornings, May–September**
- **One-hour sessions**
- Delivered by **Park Yoga**, in partnership with **Wiltshire & Swindon Sport (WASP)**

### *Cost*

- **£1,500 total for the season**
- Based on **£75 per week × 20 weeks**
- Cost covers **yoga instructors**

### *Funding position (2026)*

- WASP have asked Melksham Town Council to confirm **whether funding has been allocated for 2026 – and the allocation is the budget for 2026-2027**
- WASP confirm their **three-year funding model (2025–2027)** requires venues to fund instructor costs

### From the **Park Yoga 2025 Evaluation Report**:

- 99% participant satisfaction
- 90% report improved happiness
- 74% report increased physical activity

Free, inclusive outdoor activity supporting **health, wellbeing and park usage**

**Recommendation:** support as per budget allocation.

## 22.4 World Friendship Day – 30<sup>th</sup> July

We will hold a friendship-themed film showing as part of our ongoing series of film sessions e.g. Inside Out.

Subject to weather conditions, we propose to run an activity at King George V for children with the intention of making new friends. For businesses, we're suggesting that they host their own friendship-themed event, e.g. a Make A Friend Table (perhaps with some special incentive, e.g. a discount). Partnership Officer has already identified several candidates.



### **Item 23 Park Play (KGV Park booking) – Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> & 18th April 2026**

A community sport programme by Wiltshire Council, offering free taster sport sessions at King George V Playing Fields. Spurgeons will be present doing consultations.

### **Item 24 Bands by the Bridge (KGV Park booking) - Saturday 2nd May 2026**

A live music event being held in King George V by the Kingston Group, in support of Wilts and Bath Air Ambulance. There will be live music from Helena Eden, Lowrie, Ukey Dukes, The Sitting Ducks, Shut The Front Door, The 789s, Pipe Dream and Foo Lizzy. (Park Hire). Tickets and details from: [The Kingston Group - Bands By The Bridge | Melksham](#)

### **Item 25 Adventure Centre safety event (KGV Park booking) - Friday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2026**

The Adventure Centre will be running a session about child safety on the riverside at KGV. They originally paid a £50 hire fee, however they will be refunded according to the free park hire terms.

### **Item 26 Armed Forces Day picnic (KGV Park booking) – 27 June Planned**

A planned community picnic in the park for Armed Forces Day. Hire of KGV is being provided for free, as well as support from the council with publicity, and event documentation and licensing.

### **Item 27 The Melksham Festival/Melksham Fringe Festival**

Funded by the Council, a new festival in Melksham to celebrate the arts. The event is planned to run from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 27<sup>th</sup> September, with a £10000 budget approved at council.

The proposed date is the last week of September, which we hope will give schools a chance to participate. The CEO and Community Officer have scheduled a meeting with area heads. Bookings for the event are being sought.

#### **Festival Project Grant Applications**

We are in the process of making speculative grant applications to enhance the festival with specific activities.



A previous grant application that had been suspended was repurposed -**Grant number: ABG2411**. Initially, the plan was to create a mural on a wall near the skate park. However, after discussions with NVB regarding the KGV master plan, the idea of restoring the old sunder mosaic emerged. It was generally agreed that mosaics placed on the ground do not fare well in our weather, so a wall installation was considered instead. The grant aims to fund a mosaic design created by young people, which could be displayed on the Bath Road toilets, as well as to reuse and restore the old mosaics from the park.

£1500 to the Japan Society; submitted.

£10000 to the Roundtree Foundation; application in progress, not yet submitted.

We will investigate further relevant grants as appropriate.

### Item 28 Remembrance Parade

Item	Date	Status
Remembrance Parade	Sun 08 Nov 2026 (Remembrance Sunday)	Planned meeting planned with RBL to discuss protocol. Band being investigated New sound system may be available.

Following discussions at a previous meeting, a meeting has been requested with Jonathan Leach of the RBL to discuss the protocol for the March this year.

Road closure will be arranged by MTC. We are searching for a band and ask interested parties to get in touch. We may have a new sound system which we can use.

### Item 29 Christmas Lights Switch-On

Item	Date	Status
Christmas Lights Switch-On	Sat 05 Dec 2026	Planned

### Date Move proposed at last meeting cancelled

We proposed to schedule the Light Switch On to November 28th with approval from the Christmas Lights Group, but it was subsequently found that the Assembly Hall was not free, as shown in our internal calendar, but had been booked by a significant regular client, although this was not listed in our event calendar.

### Recommendation



Move the Christmas road closure from 12:00 to 13:30 and the event start from 14:00 to 15:00

- to accommodate the possible KGV event (which is likely to attract those coming to the lights later in the day as a first point to visit)
- address the Post Office's concerns about. Traders may begin trading once set up.

### *Santa's Grotto*

The use of That meeting Place worked well and the whole grotto experience was judged good by attendee feedback so we propose no changes for next year.

Father Christmas is expected in his grotto from around 14:00 (pending confirmation)

### *Christmas Market*

Assembly Hall market will open at 14.00 as usual but the first hour will be promoted as quite following requests i.e. there will be no performers – and with the later start to the street trading we hope this will make market more appealing to those who requested a less intense experience.

### *Charging*

Stall Type	Dimensions	Price
Outside non-food stall	3m x 3m	£60+VAT
Outside Charity	3m x 3m	£25 (no VAT)
Outside large / food stall	>3m x 3m	£108.33+VAT
Inside stall		£48+VAT
Inside Charity		£25 (no Vat?)

We are increasing the cost for outside non-food stalls to encourage small traders to choose indoor locations, which benefits them and simplifies management. Only more professional traders are expected to opt for outdoor spots.

Indoor tables are free this year thanks to our recent acquisition which we hope will encourage traders to use ours – simplifies setup

**NB: Stall bookings for Christmas have not started yet as we are awaiting confirmation on the potential KGV event – clearly this could change the dynamics of the day and must be made clear to potential stallholders**

### Item 30 Carols Round the Tree

Item	Date	Status
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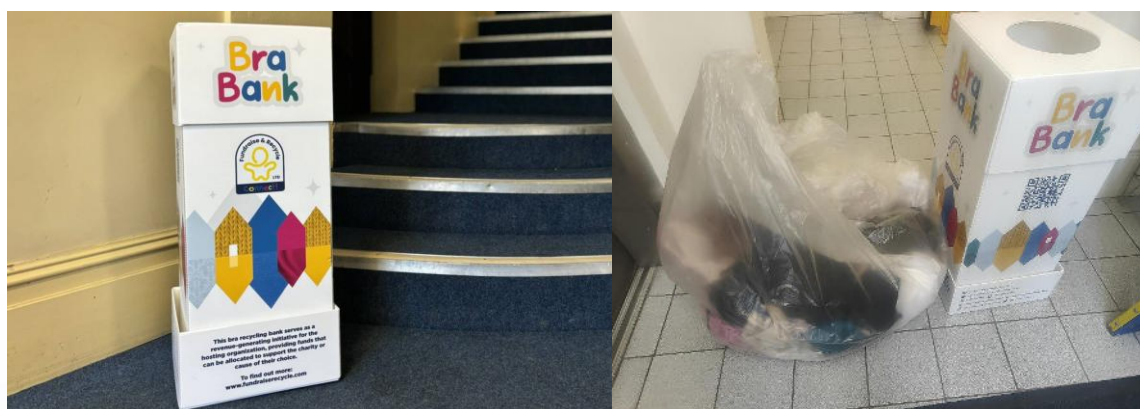
Carols Around the Tree Fri 19 Dec 2026 Planned

Last year, the event was moved to Thursday at the request of local schools, but none attended, and one scheduled a conflicting carol service. We are now returning to Friday evening, as many regular attendees find it more convenient.

### Item 31 Update - Bra Bank

The bra bank has already been hugely popular, with the bank having been filled and emptied three times since it launched. Collection is ongoing and residents are encouraged to drop-off any old or unused bras to the Town Hall for recycling.

Once a location has filled approximately three to five bin bags of bras, we get in touch with the organiser, who will for a courier to collect the bras and deliver them to our processing unit. It promotes textile recycling, gives quality bras a second life with women in need, and raises money for the host of the bank to put back into the community.



### Item32 Candle Collection

The Town Hall has been functioning as a drop off point for old or unused candles on behalf of resident, Michael Saunders. The candles are being melted down and reformed for use in cooking and lighting in Ukraine.

### Item 33 Update - Wiltshire Digital Drive

Melksham Town Council is now registered as a collection point for Wiltshire Digital Drive. This has been announced by Melksham Town Council's online communications and advertised in the Melksham Independent News (12/06/2026 issue). The first donations have already been dropped off to the Town Hall.

Residents are invited to drop off any unused devices to the Town Hall.



**Item 34 Lighting Up the Town Hall**

26/01/2026	Red – Kawasaki Disease Awareness Day
14/02/2026	Green hearts – Melksham Environmental Group
06/03/2026	Fear Free – Free the Night
<b>Upcoming:</b> 17/05/2026	Blue – World Neurofibromatosis Awareness Day



We have asked for quotations to reinstate the controllers for the ih so that council officers can set colours themselves. (Currently we rely on voluntary work by Light Fantastic which is not sustainable or “fair”

**Illumination Tracking app**

Due to a growing number of illumination requests, we propose developing a streamlined application to monitor submissions, confirm councillor approval, and ensure officers are aware of authorised illuminations.

**Item 35 Mayoral Updates**

Opening Day, Might Minis Play Cafe	Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> December 2025
Work From Home Wednesday, The Hiding Place	Wednesday 7 <sup>th</sup> January 2026
The Annual Charter Sunday, Chippenham Guildhall	Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup> February 2026
Annual Show Rehearsal, Melksham School of Dance	Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup> February 2026



Reopening of their Outdoor Education Centre, Melksham Oak Community School	Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> March 2026, alongside Cllr. Glover, Chair of Melksham Without Council
Free the Night, Fear Free	Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> March 2026
Ad-hoc Visit Melksham Vegan Market	Saturday 14 <sup>th</sup> March 2026
Mayor's Civic Reception	Saturday 14 <sup>th</sup> March 2026

## Item 36 Armed Forces Covenant

Appendix 4 examines elements of the Armed forces Covenant and examples of implementation in other market towns and notes those areas which are already covered by Melksham.

Recommendation: To adopt the Armed Forces Covenant and for the People Officer, Community Officer and CEO to recommend specific components that would be appropriate to Melksham.

## Item 37 Partnerships Officer Report

### Business Partnerships Communications

In total, we have released four editions of the Melksham Business Partnership Newsletter, covering topics such as council updates, local events, sponsorship opportunities and more. The newsletter has successfully attracted engagement with roundabout sponsorship, the parking redemption scheme, the mayor's reception and so on. It has been an invaluable tool in sharing information to local businesses and helping to keep them informed on the available opportunities to get involved in. From visiting businesses in-person, they regularly comment on what they have read in the newsletter and ask further questions on related topics.

- On LinkedIn, we currently have 84 subscribers
- Our March email newsletter was sent to 109 subscribed contacts, and we aim to continue growing this list through networking and connecting with more local businesses.

You can find our LinkedIn [here](#).

### Mayor's Reception and Civic Awards

The Mayor's Reception took place on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2026 and **raised £3,605.77** for the Mayor's two chosen charities: FearFree and Wiltshire & Bath Air Ambulance.



- We welcomed a total of 109 guests, with 95 paid tickets (£25 per person) and 14 complimentary tickets across 12 tables
- Ticket income totalled £1,900 (exc VAT), with eight table sponsors contributing an additional £1,200
- Evie's Kitchen provided a tapas style dinner, which was accompanied with flamenco dancing, Melksham's Civic Awards and a fundraising auction across the evening
- The event was not only cost neutral, but raised £995.76 before the auction/raffle
- On the night, we raised £1,765 from the auction and £845 from the raffle.

At the Mayor's Reception, the Melksham Civic Awards took place. Judging was completed by Saffi Rabey and Terri Welch. This year's categories sought to highlight the exceptional individuals whose dedication, passion, and hard work positively impact the lives of others. Congratulations to award winners, Carolyn Fernandes, Wendy Issac, Ellis Holloway and Karen Dwyer for their well-deserved accomplishment.

### Roundabout Sponsorship

Roundabout sponsorship continues to perform well, with 22 of 37 signage positions (59.46%) signed and paid for. Each sponsorship is a minimum two-year period, and the first sponsors go live on 1 April. Signs/posts have been ordered ready for installation. We plan to share photos of the installation on social media, to show what roundabout sponsorship offers and further promote the businesses involved in the programme.

The scheme has generated **£10,977.50 income, exceeding the annual income target** before the new financial year begins. This is made up of five different businesses.

Following feedback from the initial launch, sponsorship is now sold per sign rather than per roundabout, making the scheme more accessible for smaller businesses during the current economic climate.

You can read more about roundabout sponsorship [here](#).

### LinkedIn

Between January and March, our LinkedIn metrics continue to show strong growth:

- 10.3% increase in impressions



- 300% increase in comments
- 33.3% increase in reposts

Last report showed a staggering increase in impressions, following a restart of regular posting on LinkedIn from Melksham Town Council. It's therefore positive to see a continuation in not only impressions, but more meaningful metrics which show engagement like comments.

During this time, the top three posts were:

- 🎉 Fancy a night out? Join us for a Spanish-Themed Evening of Music and Tapas.
- 🔔 Melksham Town Council sets 026-27 Budget.
- 🍷☕ Connecting with the Melksham Business Community.

Based on this, we plan to continue sharing events in Melksham, Council related decisions and posts which show connection with the community.

### **Hanging Baskets**

Six new businesses have ordered hanging baskets, who have not previously taken part in the scheme. This has resulted in an additional 14 baskets being sold, and 5 new brackets being installed to businesses. 22 baskets have also been sold to existing customers.

### **Sale comparison:**

- 2024: 38 baskets
- 2025: 34 baskets
- 2026: 41 baskets

The budget expects a total of 37 baskets sold at £60+VAT, meaning we have surpassed our income target.

- Hanging basket uptake was challenging due to:
- Business closures - 6 brackets are part of vacant buildings
- Financial challenges – Many businesses do not have the available cash to invest in hanging baskets this year

Inability to install new brackets to new customers – Three businesses explored bracket installation but could not proceed due to planning permission, building structure, or lack of space. This reflects our proactive approach despite limitations.

However, we are pleased to have secured new business and look forward to expanding the network of hanging baskets across Melksham.



## Free The Night

From a business partnerships perspective, this event had strong business engagement. Businesses said they were pleased to be included and it was positive to see that the event helped bring people into Melksham town centre/ KGV who may not have otherwise gone out on a drizzly evening.

Business involvement included:

- Hosted banner making workshop at Doubles Coffee, Pizza and Records the weekend before, following discussions about their interest in being more involved in town events.
- Evie's Kitchen supported the evening activities at King George V Playing Fields, serving gyros, facilitating West Wilts Radio and playing music to keep energy high after the march.
- Asda Melksham donated water for the event.

Thank you to our partners.

## Network & Learn

Our first Network & Learn session will take place on 24 March, 10.00–12.00, where Wiltshire Police will deliver a Cyber Protect session.

We have promoted the free event via word of mouth, Facebook, and LinkedIn. We aim to develop these into ongoing sessions supporting business networking and skill development.

Businesses can sign up using the Wiltshire Police Cyber Protect online booking form.

[Wiltshire Police Cyber Protect Booking – Fill in form](#)

or email [partnership@melksham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:partnership@melksham-tc.gov.uk)

We have received 5 sign-ups, with a further 4 unique interests on the LinkedIn event.



## Appendix 1

# Melksham Friday Evening Marketplace: Community Entertainment Initiative

Community Development Proposal

2026-01-31

## Executive Summary

This proposal outlines an innovative community initiative to transform Melksham's town centre marketplace into a vibrant evening entertainment hub every Friday from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM. The initiative aims to create a welcoming space where residents can enjoy light entertainment, socialise in a relaxed atmosphere, and support local businesses through increased footfall and trading opportunities.

**Vision Statement:** To establish a regular Friday evening gathering that brings the community together, supports local performers and traders, and revitalises Melksham's night-time economy through accessible, family-friendly entertainment.

The proposal addresses regulatory requirements, community engagement strategies, funding opportunities, and practical implementation considerations to ensure successful delivery and long-term sustainability.

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6. [Risk Management](#)
7. [Next Steps](#)

## Project Overview

### Core Concept

The Melksham Friday Evening Marketplace initiative will create a weekly community gathering featuring:

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



- **Entertainment Programme:** Local musicians, acoustic performers, jugglers, magicians, and other family-friendly entertainers We will encourage buskers with a guaranteed income (small) from the council
- **Seating Areas:** Comfortable deck chairs and tables arranged throughout the marketplace
- **Light Trading:** Local vendors offering food, drinks, and artisan products
- **Community Atmosphere:** A relaxed, inclusive environment encouraging social interaction

## Target Schedule

- **Frequency:** Every Friday evening (weather permitting)
- **Duration:** 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM (90 minutes)
- **Season:** April through September initially, with potential winter adaptations
- **Capacity:** 50-150 attendees depending on weather and programming

## Location Advantages

The marketplace outside Melksham Town Hall provides an ideal setting with:

- Central location accessible to all residents
- Historic character enhancing the community atmosphere
- Existing infrastructure and proximity to town facilities
- Natural amphitheatre effect for performances
- Easy access for vendors and equipment setup

## Community Benefits

### Social Cohesion

**Building Connections:** Regular gatherings will strengthen community bonds by providing a consistent meeting point for residents of all ages and backgrounds.

**Intergenerational Engagement:** The format encourages families to attend together, fostering relationships between different age groups within the community.

**Cultural Celebration:** Local performers will have a platform to showcase their talents, celebrating Melksham's creative community.

### Economic Impact

**Night-Time Economy:** The initiative directly supports Wiltshire Council's objectives for town centre regeneration by extending active hours beyond traditional business times

[2].



**Local Business Support:**

- Increased footfall for nearby shops and restaurants
- Direct trading opportunities for local food and craft vendors
- Potential for cross-promotion with existing businesses

**Performer Economy:** Provides paid opportunities for local entertainers, supporting the creative sector.

## Health and Wellbeing

**Mental Health Benefits:** Regular social interaction and community events contribute significantly to residents' mental wellbeing and sense of belonging.

**Physical Activity:** Encourages residents to walk into town centre rather than drive to out-of-town entertainment venues.

**Cultural Access:** Provides free or low-cost entertainment accessible to all income levels.

## Regulatory Framework

### Licensing Requirements

Based on Wiltshire Council guidelines, the initiative will likely require:

**Event Management Plan:** Comprehensive planning document required for gatherings over 50 people, including risk assessments and emergency procedures.

**Public Liability Insurance:** Minimum £5 million coverage required for all activities, with additional coverage for vendors and performers.

**Street Trading Consents:** Individual vendors may need appropriate licenses from Wiltshire Council, with daily consent fees approximately £20 + VAT – but WC may allow us to book directly.

### Application Timeline

- **2 months advance notice:** Required for events with 0-499 attendees
- **Event approval letter:** Must be obtained from Melksham Town Council before each event
- **Vendor coordination:** Street trading applications must be submitted separately by each trader



## Health and Safety Compliance

**Risk Assessment:** Comprehensive evaluation covering:

- Weather-related risks and contingency plans
- Crowd management and emergency evacuation procedures
- Equipment safety for seating and performance areas
- Food safety standards for vendors

**Emergency Procedures:** Clear protocols for medical emergencies, severe weather, and crowd control.

## Implementation Strategy

### Phase 1: Foundation (Months 1-2)

**Stakeholder Engagement:**

- Present proposal to Melksham Town Council
- Engage with Wiltshire Council licensing team
- Build relationships with local performers and potential vendors
- Conduct community consultation sessions

**Infrastructure Planning:**

- Source portable seating (deck chairs and tables)
- Identify storage solutions for equipment
- Plan electrical requirements for sound systems
- Develop weather contingency procedures

### Phase 2: Pilot Programme (Months 3-4)

**Trial Events:** Run 4-6 pilot events to test logistics and community response

**Performance Recruitment:**

- Partner with local music groups and schools
- Develop performer application process
- Establish fair payment structure (£50-£150 per performance)

**Vendor Network:** Recruit 3-5 regular vendors offering complementary services

### Phase 3: Regular Programming (Month 5+)

**Weekly Schedule:** Establish consistent Friday evening programming  
**Community Ownership:** Form volunteer committee to support ongoing operations  
**Evaluation and Adaptation:** Regular review and improvement based on community feedback



## Community Engagement Strategy

**Inclusive Programming:** Ensure diverse entertainment reflecting Melksham's community demographics

### Accessibility:

- Wheelchair accessible seating arrangements
- Clear pathways and emergency access
- Hearing loop availability for performances

### Communication Channels:

- Social media presence for weekly updates
- Partnership with local newsletter and radio
- Community notice boards and word-of-mouth promotion

### RADIO

- After West Wilts Radio's successful live broadcast at our Fear Free event, we will look into airing more live shows from the marketplace.
- Timing may need to be adjusted to suit the radio station's schedule.

## Funding and Financial Planning

### Startup Costs

Item	Estimated Cost
Equipment (chairs, tables, sound system)	£2,500 allocated from 2025 – 2026 budget, though under spend.
Initial licensing and insurance	£ Covered by our Insurance
Marketing and promotion	£ Internal Officers
<b>Total Initial Investment</b>	<b>£2,500</b>

### Ongoing Monthly Costs

Item	Monthly Cost
Performer fees (4 events)	£50 – 200 (buskers would be allowed to supplement)
Insurance and licensing	£0 (should be covered by our existing insurance)
Equipment maintenance	£50-£100
<b>Total Monthly Operating</b>	<b>£200-300 per month</b>
	<b>Total Project cost up to £2,200</b>

### Funding Opportunities

#### Local Authority Grants:



- **Wiltshire Area Board Grants:** Up to £5,000 available for community projects that demonstrate local support and clear benefits

### Sponsorship

Businesses may choose to sponsor the performer in order to gain a presence, such as a stand and opportunities for promotion.

### National Funding Sources:

- **Arts Council England:** National Lottery Project Grants (£1,000-£100,000) for community arts projects
- **National Lottery Community Fund:** Community grants for projects bringing people together
- **Community Foundation Grants:** Local funding opportunities through Wiltshire Community Foundation

### Revenue Generation:

- Vendor pitch fees (£10-£20 per evening)
- Voluntary donations from attendees
- Sponsorship from local businesses
- Merchandise sales (branded items)

## Financial Sustainability Model

**Year 1:** Grant-funded establishment phase **Year 2+:** Mixed funding model combining:

- 40% ongoing grants and sponsorship
- 30% vendor contributions
- 20% community fundraising
- 10% merchandise and donations

## Risk Management

### Weather Contingency

**Cancel** at >20% rain risk on day

**Consider Covered Alternatives:** Partnership with local venues for indoor backup options during severe weather

**Communication System:** Clear cancellation procedures communicated via social media and local networks

**Equipment Protection:** Weatherproof storage and quick setup/breakdown procedures



## Safety and Security

**Crowd Management:** Trained volunteers to assist with seating and emergency procedures

**First Aid:** Qualified first aider present at each event

**Security:** Coordination with local police community support officers

## Financial Risks

**Insurance Coverage:** Comprehensive public liability and event cancellation insurance

**Budget Monitoring:** Monthly financial reviews and contingency fund maintenance

**Vendor Uptake:** Short duration will only suit very specific vendors

## Immediate Actions (Next 30 Days)

- Present proposal to Melksham Town Council
- Schedule meeting with Wiltshire Council licensing team
- Begin community consultation process
- Research and contact potential funding sources

## Short-term Goals)

- Submit grant applications to identified funding sources
- Complete licensing and insurance arrangements
- Recruit initial performer and vendor network
- Purchase or lease essential equipment

## Long-term Objectives

- Establish regular weekly programming
- Form community volunteer committee

## Success Metrics

### Community Engagement:

- Average attendance figures
- Repeat visitor rates
- Community feedback scores

### Economic Impact:

- Local business footfall increases



- Vendor revenue generation
- Employment opportunities created

**Cultural Development:**

- Number of local performers engaged
  - Diversity of programming
  - Community pride and ownership indicators
- 

## Conclusion

The Melksham Friday Evening Marketplace initiative represents an opportunity to strengthen community bonds, support local businesses, and create a vibrant cultural hub in the heart of our town. With careful planning, appropriate funding, and strong community support, this project could improve Melksham's social and economic life.

The initiative aligns with broader objectives for town centre regeneration while remaining accessible, inclusive, and sustainable. By starting with a focused pilot programme and building gradually based on community response, we can ensure long-term success and community ownership.



## Appendix 2

### Meet Melksham/Celebrate Melksham

#### Community Discovery Event Proposal

##### 1. Executive Summary

Celebrate Melksham is a proposed community discovery event designed to bring together local clubs, societies, community groups, and relevant venues in a single, accessible location so residents can explore what is available in Melksham and identify activities they may wish to join.

The event is planned for **Melksham Assembly Hall** on **Saturday, 16 May 2026**. It will feature a marketplace format, allowing residents to interact directly with local organizations. Admission is free for the public, while participating groups will pay a small fee (such as £5 per table) to discourage last-minute cancellations. The main aim is to foster engagement within the community and among various groups. Additionally, MTC will benefit by creating and maintaining a live, GDPR-compliant database of community groups to support ongoing communication, engagement, and council events.

##### 2. Background and Rationale

Melksham has a wide range of clubs, societies, and informal community groups, many of which rely on limited or informal routes to reach potential new members. Residents may not be aware of the full range of opportunities available, particularly those new to the town, returning to activities, or seeking social connection.

Celebrate Melksham responds to this by creating a single, visible opportunity for residents to:

- Discover local groups and activities

It also provides an opportunity for groups and venues to connect with each other and with the council.

##### 3. Event Objectives

The objectives of Celebrate Melksham are to:

- Increase public awareness of clubs, societies, and activities in Melksham

##### 4. Event Overview



**Event name:** Celebrate Melksham **Event type:** Community discovery / meet-up event  
**Proposed date:** Saturday, 16 May 2026 **Time:** 10:00am – 3:00pm **Venue:** Melksham Assembly Hall

The event will consist of stalls or tables allocated to participating organisations, allowing members of the public to circulate freely and engage informally.

To reduce last-minute withdrawals and “no shows”, a **small deposit (e.g. £5 per table)** will be taken from participating organisations. Charges for groups will be minimal, and entry for the public will be free.

## 5. Participating Organisations

### 5.1 Clubs, Societies and Community Groups

Groups will be identified and invited through:

- Existing Melksham Town Council contacts and records

Both established and informal groups will be encouraged to participate.

### 5.2 Businesses and Venues Hosting Groups

The event may also include **businesses and venues that regularly host clubs or community activities**, such as cafés, halls, studios, or commercial venues used by groups.

Their involvement:

- Improves visibility of available meeting spaces

Engagement with these organisations will be coordinated with officers responsible for communications, partnerships, and business engagement.

## 6. Promotion and Communications

### 6.1 Public Promotion

The event will be promoted through:

- Melksham Town Council website and social media

The focus will be on positioning the event as **the place to find out what you can join in Melksham.**

### 6.2 Officer Involvement



- The **Communications Officer** will support online promotion and any future online directory.

## 7. Community Group Database and Legacy

### 7.1 Database Creation

As part of event preparation and follow-up, the council will create and maintain a **comprehensive database of local clubs, societies, groups, and relevant venues.**

This will record, where provided:

- Group or organisation name

This database will be kept live through **regular contact and updates.**

### 7.2 GDPR and Data Management

The database will be **GDPR-compliant**, with clear consent for inclusion and use. Information will be used to support community engagement, communications, and event planning, and will be reviewed periodically to ensure accuracy.

### 7.3 Future Use and Online Directory

A longer-term outcome may be the development of an **online community directory**, allowing residents to search for clubs and activities and enabling groups to keep their details current.

The database will support:

- Promotion of council-run and partner events

## 8. Conclusion

Celebrate Melksham provides a practical, inclusive mechanism to connect residents with the community life of the town while creating lasting value through a maintained contact base. The event supports participation, volunteering, partnership working, and improved communication between the council, community groups, and venues.





## Appendix 3

### **Proposed Melksham Makers' Market & Melksham Town Council Partnership Agreement**

*Between Melksham Town Council (MTC) and Nicola Coleman & Sarah Hillman  
(Melksham Makers' Market Organisers)*

#### **Background & Purpose**

Melksham Makers' Market (MMM) was established in 2019 by Nicola Coleman and Sarah Hillman to provide a regular, not-for-profit craft and makers' market in the heart of Melksham. The market was created in collaboration with Melksham Town Council, who agreed to host the market and liaise with Wiltshire Council regarding use of the Market Place.

From the outset, the aim has been to:

- Support and showcase local makers and small businesses
- Encourage footfall and community engagement in the town centre
- Provide a vibrant, regular event in the Melksham Market Place
- Operate on a not-for-profit basis, with stall fees set only to cover running costs

Over the years, the market has grown from 12 stalls to over 25, becoming a well-known and well-loved part of the local calendar.

This document sets out a clear agreement between both parties, outlining responsibilities, use of funds, communication expectations, and shared goals - ensuring the market's continued success and sustainability, especially in the event of future staff changes at MTC or changes in organisers of the MMM.

#### **Roles & Responsibilities**

##### **Melksham Makers' Market Organisers (Nicola & Sarah):**

*Organise and curate each market, including:*

- Advertising available pitches for upcoming markets
- Booking and communicating with traders
- Creating promotional materials
- Managing logistics and layout
- Continue to run the market on a not-for-profit basis



- Promote the market through social media and printed materials
- Provide Melksham Town Council with confirmed market dates each autumn for the following year

#### **Melksham Town Council (Host):**

- Submit the annual land-use request to Wiltshire Council (typically each autumn)
- Host the market via that arrangement with Wiltshire Council
- Provide use of MTC-owned gazebos where needed
- Arrange for staff to put up and take down gazebos on market days
- Promote the market via MTC channels and offer ongoing support

**TO DECIDE:** will there be a MMM page on the MTC website? All is required is a short description of the market, a list of dates for the year and a link to contact us.  
[Communications Officer]

#### **Use of Market Funds (If Held by MTC)**

If stallholder pitch fees are transferred back to MTC rather than held by the organisers, the following use of funds must be agreed and honoured:

#### **Ongoing Expenses to Be Covered:**

- Monthly A5 advert in *Melksham News* (5 per year plus 1 for Christmas)
- Email account costs (~£16/month)
- Facebook/Instagram sponsored posts (~£30/month)
- Annual flyer printing for all market dates
- General and Christmas banners (updated annually if needed)
- Assembly Hall hire for the indoor Christmas market
- Annual donation to Melksham Food Bank (£2 from every pitch fee)
- Payment for MTC staff to put up / take down gazebo on market days

#### **Admin Support:**

- Time spent by MTC staff to complete Wiltshire Council paperwork and liaise with their compliance team can be reimbursed from market funds



**Note:** Nicola and Sarah must have visibility of how much market money is held, and must not require ongoing approval or justification for standard running costs. These are essential to the market's success and form part of the agreed budget.

**Would it be easier if we deducted the email costs / foodbank donation / cost of sponsored posts from the final amount of stall holder fees each month before transferring the money to MTC?**

*If, at any point, the stallholder funds held by MTC result in a surplus beyond standard running costs, this must be clearly communicated to Nicola and Sarah.*

*Decisions about how any surplus is used will be made jointly between MTC and the organisers, with spending agreed in advance.*

*Any surplus must continue to support the continued success of the Melksham Makers' Market; for example, by contributing towards the purchase of new gazebos or other shared equipment, as well as helping to promote local makers, increase footfall to the town, and celebrate the Market Place as a vibrant community space.*

*Surplus funds must not be used for unrelated council activities.*

- Possible agreed uses could include:
- Contributing to costs associated with having a dedicated MMM webpage on the MTC website
- Contributing to the costs associated with MTC's advertising commitments in the Melksham News
- Bunting / flowers in the market place

### **Christmas Makers' Market (Separate Event)**

The Christmas Makers' Market is organised independently by Nicola and Sarah and is **booked directly with the Melksham Assembly Hall**. This event is not hosted by MTC and does not require any support with set-up, staffing, liaising with Wiltshire Council or logistics.

As such, it is considered a separate event from the five outdoor Makers' Markets and will be managed entirely by the organisers.

- No funds from the Christmas market will be transferred to Melksham Town Council
- Stallholder pitch fees will be collected and held by Nicola and Sarah and used to:
- Pay Assembly Hall hire fees directly
- Fund advertising (e.g. *Melksham News* adverts and Christmas-specific banners)
- Cover printing or promotional materials
- Make the monthly donation to the Melksham Food Bank



This arrangement allows MTC to focus on its own Christmas events and community activities, while the Christmas Makers' Market continues as a festive highlight, independently run but still part of the town's wider seasonal celebrations.

### **Promotion & Visibility**

To reflect the partnership and shared commitment to supporting Melksham:

#### **Melksham Town Council will:**

- Support market promotion by sharing or reposting organiser content on social media in the run-up to each market
- Continue to publicly support and attend markets where appropriate

#### **Melksham Makers' Market will:**

- Add the MTC logo to the MMM branding and promotional materials
- Refer to the partnership in relevant posts and promotions
- Actively acknowledge MTC's support in social and printed materials

### **Market Identity & Boundaries**

To avoid confusion and maintain the integrity of the market:

- Melksham Makers' Market remains independently organised and curated by Nicola and Sarah
- MTC is the host of the event but not the organiser or co-curator
- MTC will not:
  - Book stalls or traders without agreement
  - Book entertainment or music without prior consultation
  - Have input into trader selection

MTC are, however, very welcome to attend all markets and have a presence, such as a Community Team space, to engage with the public.

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### **Brand & Communication Ownership**

The Melksham Makers' Market is a recognised name with an established visual identity. A professional logo was commissioned a few years ago and paid for using stallholder fees, as part of the market's not-for-profit operating costs.

- Nicola and Sarah will retain full ownership of the Melksham Makers' Market logo.



- They will also continue to manage and have full control over all MMM social media channels and communications (e.g. Instagram, Facebook, email marketing)
- 

### Shared Vision

This partnership is rooted in shared values - a belief in community, creativity, and the importance of a thriving local town centre.

By working together:

- **Melksham Town Council** strengthens its connection with residents and supports local enterprise
- **Nicola & Sarah** continue to provide a well-run, high-quality market that draws footfall and attention to the town

It's a collaborative effort - and the market would not be possible without both parties involved.



## Appendix 4

# Supporting the Armed Forces Covenant in Small Town Councils

## Impact & Examples

**Adopting the UK Armed Forces Covenant** at the town or parish council level is a **low-cost commitment** that can yield significant community benefits. **There are no direct financial costs to signing the Covenant** – it is essentially a pledge of support. For small councils like Melksham, signing on demonstrates solidarity with the Armed Forces community (serving personnel, veterans, and families) and commits the council to ensuring they are treated fairly and not disadvantaged due to their service. Below are some examples of how various small town councils have implemented the Covenant, the actions they've taken, costs and funding aspects, and the benefits, challenges, and lessons learned from their experiences.

## Typical Actions and Commitments under the Covenant

Small councils that adopt the Armed Forces Covenant often undertake a range of **practical actions** and policy commitments, scaled appropriately to their size and resources. Common initiatives include:

- **Public Pledges of Support:** Formally **signing the Covenant in a public ceremony** or council meeting, often involving local military units, veterans' groups, and community members. This raises awareness and signals the council's commitment. For example, Workington Town Council held an official signing with the town mayor, a local Army regiment captain, veterans, schoolchildren, and other dignitaries present. [[workington...cil.gov.uk](http://workington...cil.gov.uk)]
- **Armed Forces-Friendly Policies:** Declaring the council to be "*Armed Forces-friendly*." This can involve **displaying the Covenant logo** on council media and reviewing council HR policies to support employees or volunteers who are reservists, cadet instructors, or veterans. For instance, **Hertford Town Council** updated its staff policies to accommodate reservists and actively recruits veterans and military spouses by advertising council job vacancies on Forces-friendly job boards. [[hertford.gov.uk](http://hertford.gov.uk)]
- **Community Events and Recognition:** Supporting or hosting events that honour the Armed Forces. Councils often **take part in Armed Forces Week, Armed Forces Day, Remembrance Day and the Poppy Appeal**. They may organize or contribute to local Armed Forces Day celebrations, parades, or remembrance services. *Leominster Town Council* (Herefordshire) **hosted the**



county's **Armed Forces Day in 2018** when it signed the Covenant.

**Melksham:** already supports Remembrance Sunday and the poppy appeal but could look at more activity in armed forces week: this year we will be supporting a proposed picnic

- **Improving/adding memorials:** Many councils have added war memorials maintenance and support for Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day ceremonies to their commitments but Melksham has already done well in this area – Leominster explicitly pledged to “*restore and maintain the memorial*” and continue Armistice observances. [[hertford.gov.uk](http://hertford.gov.uk)] [[leominster...cil.gov.uk](http://leominster...cil.gov.uk)], [[leominster...cil.gov.uk](http://leominster...cil.gov.uk)] [[leominster...cil.gov.uk](http://leominster...cil.gov.uk)]

**Melksham:** has already put significant effort into re-siting and recovering the Avon memorial and the town's main Church Street memorial is in good order.

- **Supporting Veterans and Families:** Creating a welcoming environment and support structure for veterans and military families in the community. **No member of the Armed Forces community should face disadvantage accessing local services** – councils reiterate this principle and seek to uphold it (e.g. giving priority or special consideration to injured servicemembers in local services, where applicable). Some actions include **signposting to services** (like linking to the Veterans' Gateway on the council website), helping veterans navigate housing or welfare inquiries, or working with the principal authority (county/district council) to address any local needs. [[leominster...cil.gov.uk](http://leominster...cil.gov.uk)] [[narborough...-pc.gov.uk](http://narborough...-pc.gov.uk)]

**Melksham** has in house skills to alter its website so some linking should be relatively straightforward.

- **Employment and Skills Support:** Many town councils use their convening power to encourage local employment of ex-service personnel and reservists. For example, *Narborough Parish Council* in Norfolk pledges to **promote veteran employment** by encouraging local businesses to hire veterans and military spouses and to consider offering discounts to the Armed Forces community. *Hertford Town Council* similarly recognizes military skills in its hiring and lists vacancies on the Career Transition Partnership platform to attract service leavers. These actions not only assist the individuals but also help fill local jobs with skilled candidates. [[narborough...-pc.gov.uk](http://narborough...-pc.gov.uk)], [[narborough...-pc.gov.uk](http://narborough...-pc.gov.uk)] [[hertford.gov.uk](http://hertford.gov.uk)], [[hertford.gov.uk](http://hertford.gov.uk)] Some organisations guarantee interviews for ex-servicemembers, but this is not a requirement of the pledge.
- **Youth and Cadet Engagement:** Small councils often seek to support local cadet units (Army Cadets, Air Training Corps, Sea Cadets) and related youth groups. **Melksham** already does much of this by supporting cadets, **involving cadets in civic events, appointing a “Mayor's Cadet” to attend civic functions), or councillors volunteering with cadet organizations.** Leominster's Covenant commitment explicitly includes encouraging council



staff or members to serve as adult volunteers in the cadet forces, strengthening intergenerational ties and youth development.

[\[hertford.gov.uk\]](http://hertford.gov.uk) [\[leominster...cil.gov.uk\]](http://leominster...cil.gov.uk)

- **Championing Armed Forces Causes:** Many councils nominate an **Armed Forces Champion** or lead councillor to keep Covenant pledges active. For example, Hertford Town Council appointed two Covenant Champions from among its councillors to drive these initiatives and be points of contact with the armed forces community. Councils also frequently partner with local branches of armed forces charities (like the Royal British Legion) to coordinate support and events. [\[hertford.gov.uk\]](http://hertford.gov.uk)

These activities are typically folded into the council’s community engagement efforts. Crucially, **the Covenant does not intend to give the Armed Forces community ‘special advantages’ over others but seeks to mitigate disadvantages** they may face from military life. In practice, that means small councils focus on **fair access and inclusive support**, while also **honouring sacrifices** (through remembrance and public appreciation). [\[cambridges...ght.org.uk\]](http://cambridges...ght.org.uk), [\[cambridges...ght.org.uk\]](http://cambridges...ght.org.uk)

## Costs, Funding, and Resources

Implementing the Covenant at a town/parish level is **not usually budget intensive**. As noted, there is *“no direct cost to sign the Armed Forces Covenant”* – it’s a voluntary pledge. Many actions (like policy changes, publicity, liaison with local groups) are done within existing council operations and staff roles. **Typical costs** may include: minor expenses for holding a signing ceremony or Armed Forces Day event (venue, refreshments, promotional materials), the staff time spent on coordination or attending meetings, and any donations the council chooses to make to armed forces charities or events. [\[cambridges...ght.org.uk\]](http://cambridges...ght.org.uk)

Councils often find **external support and funding** for Covenant-related activities:

- The **Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust** (supported by the UK Government) provides grants to local projects that deliver Covenant outcomes. Each year a **£10 million Covenant Fund** is available, including small grants up to £20,000 for community initiatives. While these grants typically go to principal authorities or charities, town councils and community groups can partner or apply for funding for local projects (for example, to start a veterans’ drop-in centre, run a community integration project, or improve a local facility for forces families). The Covenant Fund has enabled projects like outreach services, training for staff, and veterans’ hubs in various regions. [\[local.gov.uk\]](http://local.gov.uk) [\[local.gov.uk\]](http://local.gov.uk), [\[local.gov.uk\]](http://local.gov.uk)
- **Armed Forces Day Grants:** In some cases, the Ministry of Defence offers funding to local authorities to help run Armed Forces Day events. A town council



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hosting a larger event can offset costs by securing such national funding or sponsorship from local businesses.

- **County Support:** Many counties have an Armed Forces Covenant Partnership (e.g. the Wiltshire Armed Forces Covenant partnership, “which can provide guidance, training, or joint funding for district and town councils. Small councils can piggyback on county-run initiatives – for example, attending county-level Covenant training or referring local veterans to county services. [Armed Forces Covenant - Wiltshire Council](#) [South West Armed Forces Covenant Champions Agree formation of a Regional Partnership Board - Forces Connect South West](#) In Cambridgeshire, a dedicated Covenant coordinator supports town/parish councils with toolkits and advice. [\[hertford.gov.uk\]](#) [\[cambridges...ght.org.uk\]](#), [\[cambridges...ght.org.uk\]](#)

Overall, **the financial burden on a small council is low**. Many Covenant support actions (e.g. adding a website link, encouraging local employers, flying the Armed Forces flag on Armed Forces Day) cost little to nothing. In return, councils often gain access to new networks and sometimes **free resources**: for instance, after signing the Covenant, councils become eligible for the Ministry of Defence’s **Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS)** which can confer bronze, silver, or gold awards for being a forces-friendly employer. These awards are prestigious – *Leominster Town Council* earned the MoD’s **Silver ERS Award in 2021 and Gold in 2024** as it deepened its support. Participation in ERS is free, and award recipients benefit from MoD-organized training and leadership activities as part of the “menu of benefits” for Covenant signatories. The MoD has highlighted that by signing the Covenant, councils can **access military recruitment platforms, leadership training opportunities, and even discounted venue hire on military sites** – all at no cost to the council. [\[leominster...cil.gov.uk\]](#) [\[bakewellto...cil.gov.uk\]](#)

In summary, **signing the Covenant is more about policy and community engagement commitments than about spending money**. Funding is available for substantive projects, but many supportive gestures cost very little.

## Examples of Small Town/Parish Councils and Their Covenant Initiatives

To illustrate the impact and implementation of the Armed Forces Covenant at the local level, the table below highlights **several small town and parish councils** comparable to **Melksham** that have adopted the Covenant. It summarizes their key actions, any noted costs or funding, and outcomes or observations from their experience:



