



BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL

Mayor Making Ceremony

Thursday 22nd May 2025
at 10:30 am



Blandford Forum Parish Church

ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS

Introduction

Welcome and opening prayers from the
Reverend Chris Beaumont

Welcome from the outgoing Mayor of Blandford
Forum, Cllr Nocturin Lacey-Clarke

Prayers led by the Mayor's Chaplain

Chaplain Harry Vincent

Presentation of Freedom of the Town

Presentation of Honorary Freedom of the Town
to Mr Roger Carter and Mrs Lynn Lindsay

Presentation of Certificates

Presented to any individuals who have been
nominated for recognition and approved by way
of a vote at a Town Council meeting

Mayor Making Ceremony

Buffet lunch and refreshments

in the Royal British Legion, Church Lane

Meet Councillors, officers, members of the public
and local organisations in the Overlord Room
within Legion House. Everyone is welcome.

BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL

2025 – 2026

Town Councillors

(in order of seniority)

Steve Hitchings

Hugo Miéville

Lee Hitchings

Colin Stevens

Nocturin Lacey-Clarke

Byron Quayle

Alan Cross

Rosemary Holmes

Sheila Chapman

Terry Clarkson

Yvonne Miéville

Maggie Putt

Gail Del-Pinto

Samantha Morgan

Jacqueline Robinson

Town Clerk

Linda Scott-Giles

FREEMAN OF BLANDFORD FORUM

ROGER CARTER

Councillors have resolved to grant this highest honour Blandford Forum Town Council can bestow for the valuable and devoted service that Roger Carter has rendered to the town as a citizen. Roger Carter was also nominated by Cllr Sheila Chapman for his outstanding contribution to work on the production of the Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan and the Blandford Commemoration Group.

His leadership, co-ordination and co-operation with the neighbouring parishes has led to the production of an outstanding Neighbourhood Plan which was 'made' following the referendum in 2021. In addition, the Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan Group commissioned a Design Code and Roger assisted the consultants with this impressive piece of work. Alongside the Neighbourhood Plan, this document assists Councillors and officers at both town and county level when considering planning applications.

He assumed the Chairmanship of the Blandford 1914-1918 Commemoration Group, after the sudden loss of Esme Butler, and co-ordinated the production of highly commended exhibitions and events. After 2018 it became the Blandford Commemoration Group and over the last few years, under his leadership, it has continued to produce successful, high-quality exhibitions.

The most recent exhibitions were to commemorate the 80th anniversary of D-Day in 2024 and both VE and VJ Day in 2025.

Roger devoted a long and distinguished service to the children of the town as Head of English at St Leonard's Middle School and teacher of English and Drama at The Blandford School.

He served Blandford Forum as a councillor from May 2011, stepping down in May 2024, and he held the position of Mayor in 2018/19 with distinction.

FREEMAN OF BLANDFORD FORUM

LYNN LINDSAY

Councillors have resolved to grant this highest honour Blandford Forum Town Council can bestow for the valuable and devoted service that Lynn Lindsay has rendered to the town as a citizen. Lynn Lindsay was nominated by Cllr Sheila Chapman in recognition of the lifelong support, promotion, dedication and leadership she has given to the town of her birth and the assistance she has given to many of the residents, both young and old.

In her youth, Lynn would help her mother run the outdoor swimming pool on the Ham during the summer months, assisting with the swimming lessons, pool safety lessons and the running of the swimming club. She represented Dorset in swimming competitions on numerous occasions. As a young mother, she helped organise and became qualified as a coach in the Blandford Gymnastics Club, which was situated in the Gymnasium at Blandford Camp, and the Club became very successful in the 1980/1990s.

Lynn felt strongly about playing a significant role in teaching many children and adults to swim, admitting that it was her real passion; *'water poses no obstacles and to teach someone who cannot walk and see the smile on their face when they swim is the most satisfying thing I have ever done'*.

On her election to the Town Council on 20th May 1999 Lynn proceeded to immerse herself into activities, clubs, charities and societies of the town becoming, over the years, one of the most recognised and trusted members of the Town Council by the residents of Blandford Forum and she enjoyed being their Mayor on three occasions.

Her local knowledge is formidable and has aided the Council to make sound decisions while her stewardship of the Council as Mayor and Chairman during the pandemic was admirable.

THE FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGHES

The origin of the Freedom of Cities and Boroughs dates back to the early Roman Empire when to be “born free” as a Citizen of Rome contained many privileges and rights superior to those of any other city, although it did not secure exemption from taxation.

This distinction was continued in the very early history of Britain in the Saxon constitution until about 600AD. Upon the Norman Conquest, William the Conqueror introduced the feudal system, and in 1069 he granted the Burgesses of London a charter guaranteeing them their ancient laws and privileges. Even in Saxon times “Guilds” of men of the same trade existed for mutual aid and protection, which was continued by the Normans, and the members were Freemen who were admitted only after a long apprenticeship.

In many ancient Cities which had been granted charters by successive sovereigns none but Freemen were allowed to trade wholesale and retail, which was, perhaps, their greatest privilege. Freedom could be secured originally in three ways – by patrimony, Apprenticeship of Redemption – but of more recent years, admission would be claimed by gift or marriage, and Freemen’s Courts were held until towards the end of the 19th Century for admission of Freemen, which conferred a right to a parliamentary vote, and in some towns exemption from tolls and dues according to the ancient customs retained by charter.

Before the Representation of the People Act 1832, in many Parliamentary Boroughs the Electors consisted solely of the Freemen. By virtue of the Municipal Corporation Act 1835, the Freemen ceased as such to form a part of the body corporate.

The Act, however, respected existing usages and retained a right to share in the corporate property, commons and public stock. Freedom by gift and purchase are now abolished and birth, servitude or marriage only, entitle one to be entered on the “Freeman’s Roll”.

It was the practice to confer the honorary Freedom of the Borough as a mark of distinction upon a person whom the Council wishes to honour because they are a person of distinction, or one who has rendered eminent services to the Borough. It was first recognised by the Honorary Freedom of Boroughs Act 1855, now replaced by the Local Government Act 1933.

It does not confer any of the benefits previously possessed by Freemen: but the rare distinction of the honour of Freedom in more recent times is a reflection of the value and importance that accrued to it in ancient times socially and financially, and the credit and reputation of it is thus preserved and recognised in honorary promotion for eminent services at the present day.

The practice of conferring the honorary “Freedom of Entry” upon Regiments is a fairly recent one; indeed the earliest grant appears to have been in December 1943, when the Corporation of Sheffield conferred the honour upon the York and Lancaster Regiment. However, its roots lie deep in the history of local and central government; indeed it affords an interesting example of the power and influence of the old boroughs and cities in relation to central government in the past. Of these, the cities of Edinburgh and London are the most notable.

When the Army required more men, the custom was to send a recruiting officer and party to various towns and draw public attention by the steady beat of a drum. In these cities – and there were others – permission had to be obtained by the Army from the Corporation to enter and “beat the drum”. This permission came to be granted “in solemn form”.

It was also necessary to obtain the consent of the Corporation before troops could march through towns. Hence arose the practice of conferring, as a matter of honour upon individual Regiments the right “to march through the town with bayonets fixed, drums beating and colours flying”.

From these ancient practices, the modern grant of “Freedom of Entry” can be traced.

FREEMEN OF BLANDFORD FORUM

Freeman	Date Granted
Blandford Soldiers who fought in the Boer War	1901 – 1903
Jack T Counter VC	19 th June 1918
Sir Robert Baden Powell	17 th April 1929
Lady Baden Powell	17 th April 1929
Alderman Miss E G Castleman-Smith	20 th November 1935
W H Wilson Esq.	14 th June 1949
W J Newman Esq.	8 th December 1953
The Dorset Regiment	8 th November 1955
Alderman B C Hunt	1 st November 1956
C K Lavington Esq.	12 th October 1970
The Royal Corps of Signals	11 th September 1972
The Devonshire & Dorset Regiment	1 st March 1976
Gwendoline Florence Lane	5 th March 1988
Agnes Audrey Williams	5 th March 1988
Dr David Harries Davies	13 th April 1991
Reverend Raymond O Balmer	11 th September 1995
Cyril E Hill	12 th May 2000
The Queen's Gurkha Signals	11 th September 2005
Peter J Warrington	15 th November 2005
Daphne Alner	15 th November 2005
Heather Bracewell	11 th May 2007
The Rifles Regiment	15 th October 2007
Carole A Sharp	27 th May 2011
Jackie Vacher	11 th May 2013
Esme Butler (awarded posthumously)	25 th May 2018
Dr Michael Le Bas	24 th May 2019
Roger Carter	22 nd May 2025
Lynn Lindsay	22 nd May 2025

NORTH DORSET PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION 2025

EXHIBITION OF BLANDFORD FORUM THROUGH YOUR LENS

VOTE FOR YOUR
FAVOURITE PHOTOS

VISIT ALL THE
PHOTO EXHIBITIONS
IN NORTH DORSET

CATEGORIES

UNDER 18 • AMATEUR • PROFESSIONAL

FREE ENTRY
BLANDFORD EXHIBITION
9TH MAY 2025
TO
26TH MAY 2025



BLANDFORD EXHIBITION 9TH MAY 2025 TO 26TH MAY 2025
FULL DETAILS NORTHDORSETPHOTO.CO.UK

SUPPORTED BY



Picture Framing
01258 450969

SPONSORED BY



BLANDFORD FORUM
TOWN COUNCIL



SCAN THE QR CODE FOR EXHIBITION LOCATIONS



OUTGOING MAYOR

CLLR NOCTURIN LACEY-CLARKE

Nocturin (pictured right with his mother, Jennie Fellowes) became a Town Councillor in 2016 and Mayor of Blandford Forum in May 2024. He first opened his shop in Blandford Forum during February 2014. After quickly falling in love with the town, he and his wife, Charlotte moved to Dorset Street the same year. They have been happy and active residents ever since, along with their cats.



Noc is also one of Blandford Forum's two Dorset Council Councillors. This role has meant that Noc has been able to advocate for the needs and services for Blandford Forum residents, who know they can always approach him either at work in his local charity or at home. Over the years, Noc has been involved in many groups in the town from assisting at local youth charities to playing in the local rugby club's annual Raggy Dolls match. The achievement of which he is most proud, having struggled his whole life with Asperger's Syndrome, was taking the scary step in late 2017 to change his Blandford Noc's Box shop to the New Opportunities for Community and Support Charity. This is where he can be found daily working with the wonderful children and young people of Blandford who also deal daily with Asperger's and social anxiety.

Noc is grateful to Chaplain Harry Vincent as his Mayoral Chaplain and the Mayoral Charities for 2024-25, Blandford Youth & Community Centre and Blandford Amateur Boxing Club. Highlights of his Mayoral year have been the 80th anniversaries of D-Day in June 2024 and VE Day in May 2025. These commemoration events focussed on what life would have been like in Blandford Forum during 1944-1945. Noc felt the lighting of the respective beacons by 104-year-old Gordon Grenville Hunt in 2024 and 17-year-old Alfie Owen in 2025 were particularly poignant moments.

Here is a selection of photos from the Mayoral year...



Bowling the first wood at the Bowling Club!



Celebrating Gordon's 104th birthday!



Blandford Yuletide Festival



Corn Exchange tour



D-Day 80 Proclamation Service



VE Day 80 Proclamation Service

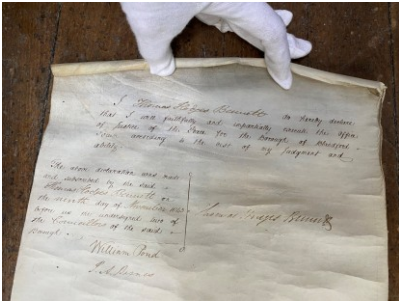
PAST MAYORS

The list below shows the Mayors of Blandford Forum Town Council since the reorganisation of local government in 1974:

2024	Nocturin Lacey-Clarke	1996	Cyril Enoch Hill
2023	Hugo Miéville	1995	Haydn Roger White
2022	Colin Stevens	1994	Frankie Maurice Lane
2021	Lee Hitchings	1993	Deborah Helen Bore
2020	Lynn Lindsay	1992	Joseph Roger Hickish
2019	Lynn Lindsay	1991	John David Barnes
2018	Roger Carter	1990	John W Turnbull
2017	Peter Clark	1989	Rev Raymond O Balmer
2016	Jackie Stayt	1988	Haydn Roger White
2015	Stephen Hitchings	1987	Cyril Enoch Hill
2014	Stephen Hitchings	1986	Cyril Enoch Hill
2013	Bob Brannigan	1985	David C Kinsey Wright
2012	Sara Loch	1984	Martin J Brickell
2011	Esme Butler	1983	Gwendoline F Lane
2010	Esme Butler	1982	Rev Raymond O Balmer
2009	Lynn Lindsay	1981	Dr David Harries Davies
2008	Sara Loch	1980	Gwendoline F Lane
2007	Stephen Hitchings	1979	Rev Raymond O Balmer
2006	Sheila Chapman	1978	Gladys May Cole
2005	Esme Butler	1977	Arthur W G Adams
2004	Gerry Chapman	1976	Dr David Harries Davies
2003	Lynn Lindsay	1975	Dr David Harries Davies
2002	Esme Butler	1974	Stanley E Lawes
2001	Sheila Chapman		
2000	Rosemary Holmes		
1999	Haydn Roger White		
1998	Peter J Warrington		
1997	Carole A Sharp		

THE MAYORAL SCROLL

In January 2023, staff took the opportunity to carefully unroll the Mayoral Scroll back to the first entry, because this had not been done in recent years and nobody knew the full history of it.



The first entry, pictured left, is dated 9th November 1843. This was for the signing in of a Justice of the Peace for the Borough of Blandford Forum named Councillor Thomas Hodges Bennett and witnessed by Councillor Pond and Councillor Barnes. Councillor Hodges would have been a Justice of the Peace by virtue of his office as Mayor.

The Justice of the Peace would consider cases in the Magistrates Court, which is the room upstairs in the Town Hall (1734), with prisoners and defendants being held in the room next door, which is now known as the Council Chamber. Due to legal reform, the first entry with a Councillor being referred to as Mayor of Blandford Forum, and not Justice of the Peace, was 1968.

The scroll covers a period of seven monarchs and 33 Prime Ministers! It reaches from the doors to the Corn Exchange to the back of the stage (level with Church Lane car park).

It was fascinating capturing an image of each entry and seeing names of Mayors from the past who are no longer with us, such as Dr David Davies, Gwendoline Lane, John Barnes, Cyril Hill, Reverend Raymond Balmer and - more recently - Esme Butler.

To help preserve the sheets from the Borough Council scroll, Councillors resolved to separate the pages into two scrolls, so the Mayoral scroll you see on the table today dates to 1974 and is for Blandford Forum Town Council only.



INCOMING MAYOR CLLR HUGO MIEVILLE

Hugo spent the early part of his life in Teignmouth, Devon where he attended the local Grammar School, enjoyed the beautiful scenery and spent many hours watching his adored football team Torquay United. After gaining BA and MA degrees in French Studies at the University of Warwick, Hugo embarked on a teaching career. He has worked at Milton Abbey School since 1985 in a variety of different roles, including Head of MFL, Housemaster and Director of Activities and is now Alumni Manager.

Hugo has lived in Blandford Forum since 2001, and he has been a Town Councillor since 2011. He has been Deputy Mayor three times between 2016 and 2025 and was the 50th Mayor of Blandford Forum in 2024.

He loves the town for its beauty, its ideal mix between Georgian town and countryside, and its very friendly community. He is greatly looking forward to having the honour of serving the community for 2025/26 as its Mayor, looking forward to the reopening of the Corn Exchange later this year.

Hugo lives in Blandford with his wife, Yvonne and his lovely black Lab, Gracie. He has a daughter called Holly, a son called William and two stepsons named James and John, who both live locally. He enjoys walking his dog, visiting France, playing golf and tennis (very badly!) and escaping to watch his favourite football team.

Yvonne and Hugo are founder members of Blandford War on Waste, advocating for a plastic-free town, and they also organise the Clean-Up Blandford Campaign, which holds regular litter-picks.

MAYOR'S CHAPLAINS

Reverends Dale & Emma Carmichael

MAYOR'S CHARITIES

TREADS

Blandford Fashion Museum
Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance

ARMED FORCES DAY EXPO



Saturday 5th July 2025

10am - 2pm

Legion House, Church Lane

Join us at this free event
showcasing military
charities and organisations
with military connections

From 9.30am Ringwood Pipe Band will
play in the market place before
marching up to Legion House for the
start of the event.



**BLANDFORD FORUM
TOWN COUNCIL**



Thanks to the Parish Church for hosting our Mayor Making ceremony today, for the second year running, whilst the Corn Exchange is closed for its refurbishment.

The works are due to be completed in September/October 2025 and include major improvements to access, acoustics, environmental measures and reinstating some of the original features.



When the ceremony has concluded, please move directly to the Overlord Room at Legion House, Church Lane where a buffet lunch will be served, which everyone is welcome to attend.

Please take the time to sign the Visitor Book whilst at Legion House.

Cover photo of Blandford Forum Parish Church taken by Pat Patrick.

Twinned with Preetz, Germany



Town Clerk's Office
Church Lane, Blandford Forum
Dorset DT11 7AD



LOCAL COUNCIL
AWARD SCHEME
QUALITY GOLD



EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME

BRONZE AWARD

Proudly supporting those who serve.

Twinned with Mortain, France



Tel: 01258 454500
admin@blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk
www.blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk