



# BANWELL PARISH COUNCIL



## **ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26**

# Banwell Parish Council – Who We Are

Parish and Town Councils are the level of local government closest to the needs of local people. A Parish Council is the first tier of local government in England and as an elected body we are responsible and responsive to our electorate (that's you!).

Laws give the Parish Council a wide remit to improve the lives of their local community. The Council collects a precept each year (a sum collected with the council tax each year from the householders in the parish) to maintain and improve facilities and services for local people. Our work falls into three categories:

- **Representing the community**
- **Delivering services to meet local needs**
- **Striving to improve quality of life in the Parish.**

You can see from the table below what your Parish Council is responsible for – and also what North Somerset Council has to do. It's helpful to know who to go to when you have a question or a problem. See our website for a more comprehensive list of who to contact when you have a problem.

[services provided by other bodies.pdf](#)

<b>BANWELL PARISH COUNCIL</b>	<b>NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL</b>
<b>Riverside Play Area and Recreation Ground</b>	<b>Overgrown hedges/trees (not on Rec or Riverside)</b>
<b>Youth &amp; Community Centre (YCC)</b>	<b>Abandoned vehicles.</b>
<b>Youth Club</b>	<b>Dog fouling</b>
<b>Cemetery</b>	<b>Fly tipping</b>
<b>Food Club initiatives</b>	<b>Lorries breaking weight limits.</b>
<b>Banwell Food Bank</b>	<b>Noise pollution</b>
<b>Community Picnic</b>	<b>Potholes</b>
<b>Dog Bins</b>	<b>Roads and pavements, incl. obstructions</b>
<b>Bus shelters</b>	<b>Streetlights (main roads)</b>
<b>Streetlights (some side roads)</b>	<b>Street signs and street furniture damage</b>
<b>Speed reduction initiatives</b>	<b>Recycling and waste</b>
	<b>Street cleaning</b>
	<b>Footpaths</b>

## Banwell Parish Councillors & Staff

Banwell Parish Council is made up of 12 Councillors - all of whom are volunteers. The period of office of a Councillor is normally 4 years, but if they have been co-opted or elected at a by-election, they will serve until the next normal election. We currently have a vacancy and would love to hear from residents aged 18+ who would be interested. Being a councillor offers valuable voluntary experience and a chance to help shape Banwell's future. Training is available.

There will be a whole council reelection in 2027. You can learn more about your councilors on Banwell Parish Council's YouTube Channel or visit [Your Councillors - Banwell Parish Council](#)

Banwell Parish Council currently employ three part time members of staff:

The Clerk – Liz Shayler ([clerk@banwellparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@banwellparishcouncil.gov.uk)),

Communications Officer – Sally-Ann Marks ([comms@banwellparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:comms@banwellparishcouncil.gov.uk)) and

Environment & Biodiversity Officer – Amy Symonds ([nature@banwellparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:nature@banwellparishcouncil.gov.uk)).

# Banwell Parish Council Chairman's Report 2025-26 (Steve Voller)

It's been another busy year across the parish and I'd like to thank everyone for their participation and engagement whether as individuals, clubs or societies. It's this that makes Banwell a community and more than simply a place to live. What follows is a summary of some of the activities and initiatives over the past year with many being continued as more than simply one-off events.

**Bringing our Community Together:** The regular Soup and Roll/Cream teas and Tea & Tech sessions have continued alongside new initiatives such as making seed bombs and willow crafting. Both were incredibly popular. The summer community picnic took place at the football club where everyone was able to wilt in the incredible summer temperatures! The Banwell Heritage Day was very well attended, and it was good to see so many taking an interest in the history of the village. We've also been undertaking parish council surgeries at Mead Fields giving residents the opportunity to meet and chat to us. Many of the topics raised are followed up with the developers and North Somerset Council (NSC).

**Supporting Resident Wellbeing:** An important subject among young and old. This has included support for the YCC, providing free training on the use of the defibrillators (to be repeated this year), supporting the Forget Me Not Café (Alzheimer's Society) through to taking a leading role in the Impact Alliance Loneliness project alongside neighbouring parish councils. Special thanks to the Clerk and Cllrs Harding and Smith for their engagement in this project which will see new events and activities being announced.

**Protecting Our Natural Environment:** Ecological surveys have taken place across the village to identify areas for improvement and ideas for new initiatives. Residents participated in the Environment group alongside councillors and the Biodiversity & Environment officer. This has seen the provision of bat boxes, swift chambers and hedgehog homes move forward. Additional hedging has been planted – supported by the Bypass Team and local groups such as the scouts. The first spring clean in Mead Fields was well supported and a reminder that the village spring clean takes place on the 16<sup>th</sup> of May. Come & join us!

**Shaping how Banwell Grows:** Work on the bypass continues apace and you may have seen that tarmac has started to be laid – a significant milestone. This time next year we should be tantalisingly close to it opening. We continue to keep in contact with the bypass team to influence where we can work that impacts on existing roads. However, disruption is inevitable given the amount of construction needed and how busy the road network is. Keep an eye out for NSC's public consultation later this year on the place-making work that will take place in the village once the bypass is open. This involves widening footpaths and creating passing zones to make the village centre more people friendly, safer and to slow down traffic. We're also encouraging NSC to extend plans for 20mph speed limits across the whole village and not just areas included in the bypass scheme.

We should expect to see later this year/next planning submissions from the Wolverhill developers. We're still concerned about NSC's draft ideas for the Strategic Green Gap and continue to challenge them even at this early stage. Thanks to the work of the parish council's planning committee and residents who commented on NSC's Local Plan 5 draft sites, which would have led to more than 300 houses being built village-side of the bypass, were removed from it.

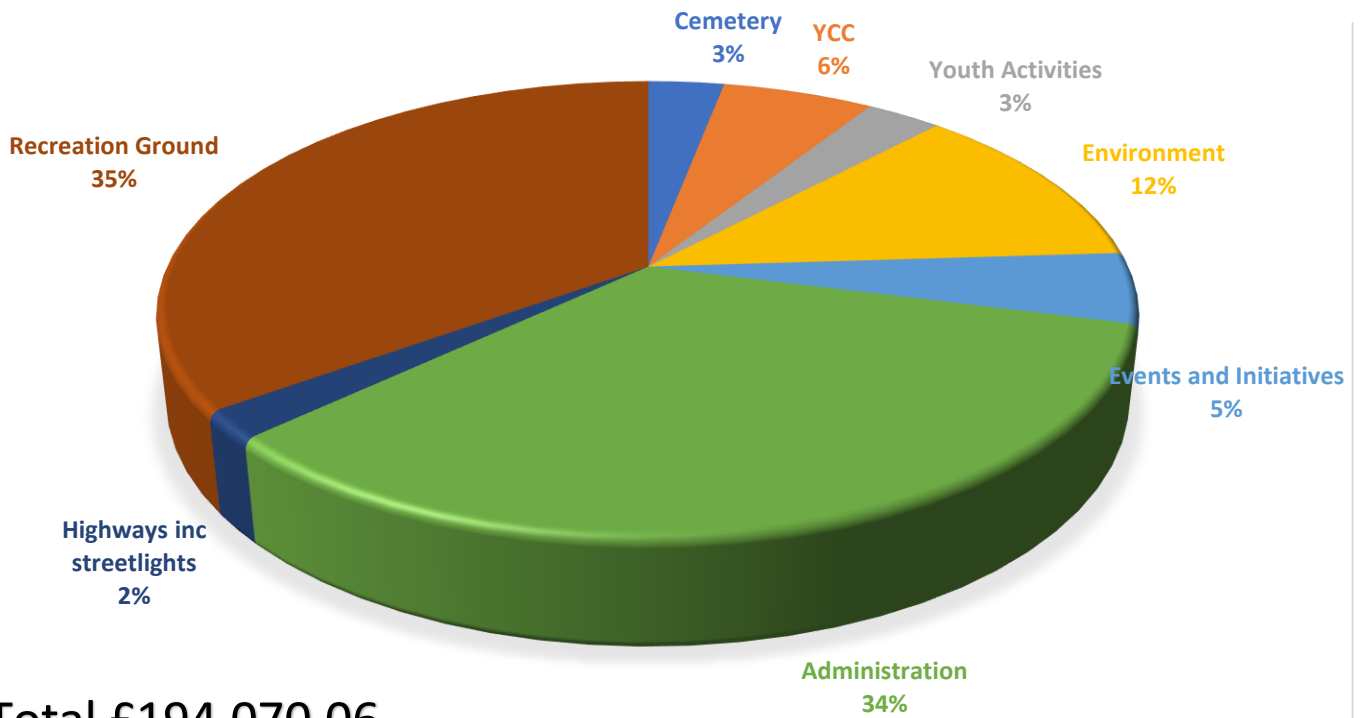
**Maintaining What Matters:** We continue to look after our local assets such as the Recreation ground and Riverside play areas, memorials, grit bins and dog bins – amongst others! A new remembrance garden has been created in the cemetery and will be planted next month.

**Investing in our Community:** Approximately £5,000 in grants and donations have been provided to local groups and charities for initiatives benefitting the general community. Non-financial support has been provided to help new groups start up, for example, use of the YCC.

**Running your Parish Council:** Last but not least a huge amount of work takes place behind the scenes to keep the parish running smoothly and efficiently. Thanks to the Clerk and for the supporting work of the Biodiversity and Environment officer, Communications officer and village orderly for all they do. Our appreciation also goes to Cllrs Thain and Manley who have left the parish council and to district councillor Tristram for his help and support when needed. Finally, my thanks to your parish councillors for their commitment and positivity throughout the year.

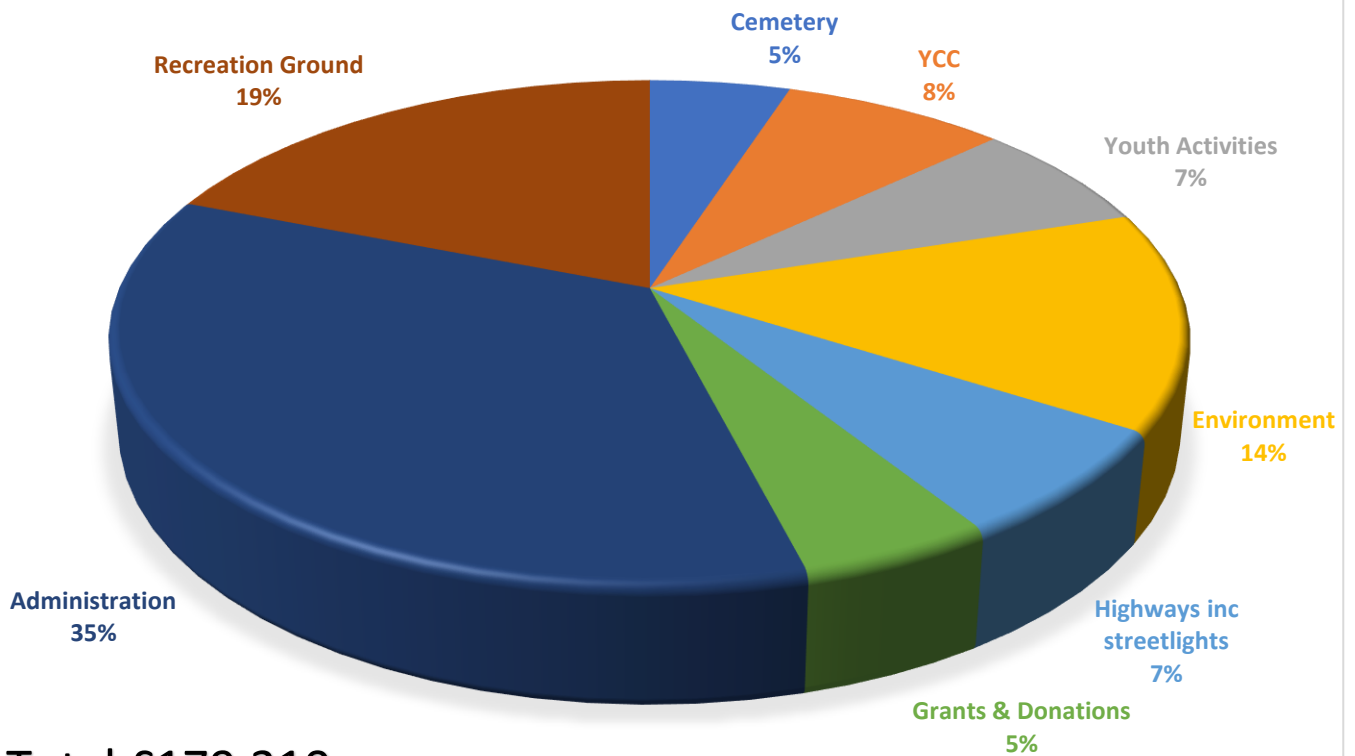
# Banwell Parish Council Accounts

## 2025/26 COUNCIL EXPENDITURE



Total £194,070.06

## 2026/27 BUDGET



Total £179,310

# Your Council Tax Precept 2026/27 Explained

The primary source of income for most Parish Councils comes from the Precept, part of the Council Tax.

## WHAT IS A PRECEPT?

The Parish Council receives a small proportion of the local Council Tax. It does not receive any direct funding from Central Government. The funding collected pays for the running of the Council and the services it provides.

## HOW IS IT CALCULATED?

The Parish Council makes an estimate of income and expenditure for the next financial year, including some for future planned projects and/or unexpected events. It is then calculated as an amount per Council Tax Band D Property and added to the Council Tax Bill for all the dwellings within the Parish area.

## HOW IS IT RAISED?

North Somerset Council collects your Council Tax on behalf of themselves, Police, Fire and the precepts for any Parish/Town Councils in their district. It is important to note that Banwell Parish Council's precept is just a small percentage of your overall Council Tax Bill.

## HOW IS IT SPENT?

Your precept is spent on maintaining the facilities and services the Parish Council offers.

Banwell Recreation Ground Riverside Play Area			Council Office Staff/Admin Grants & Donations Village Insurance
Youth & Community Centre Banwell Cemetery Streetlights			Christmas Market Tea & Tech / You Can Do IT Zebra Crossing Escort Public Living Room / Soup & a Roll
Grass Cutting Dog Bins Waste Removal Bus Shelters			<b>£86.97</b> per Band D household per year

## PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

During the next year (2026/27) Banwell Parish Council are investing in the following:

- Running Summer Holiday Youth Club related activities.
- Continuing the Public Living Room and other Parish Council Events throughout the year.
- Running more Nature focused workshops.
- Resurfacing the Multi-Use-Games Area (MUGA) at the Recreation Ground.

We hope to continue to maintain our village to the highest standards, whilst keeping costs as low as possible.

## Banwell Great British Spring / Summer Clean



Thank you to the amazing volunteers, who attend these events.

In 2026 we have already had our spring clean at Mead fields and Banwell village is scheduled for **May 16<sup>th</sup>** and **September 19<sup>th</sup>** with another Mead Fields one planned for **August 5<sup>th</sup>**. For the Banwell Village One we meet at the YCC at the bottom of the West Street carpark. For Mead Fields we meet at the Hub. All equipment and refreshments will be supplied – just bring weather appropriate clothing and a can-do attitude. See you there!

## Banwell Christmas Market

The community gathered for a wonderful day of Christmas stalls, refreshments and to visit Santa's Grotto. The Parish Council teamed up with the Community Market, local stall holders and volunteers to run the market whilst Santa accepted gift donations for families in need. The next market will be held on Saturday December 5<sup>th</sup> 2026. We hope to continue to help support local businesses and promote #BuyInBanwell.



## 'Soup and a Roll' / Cream Tea in the Public Living Room



As the weather took a cold turn and the cost-of-living skyrocketed in 2022, Banwell Parish Council set up a Public Living Room. Whilst it doubles as a warm space, its main function is to provide a space for people to socialise, work, use free Wi-Fi or simply to come along and get to know your neighbours. It continues throughout the year at Banwell Youth and Community Centre, **Tuesdays and Thursdays 10am-1pm**. Refreshments are available and now you can join us for lunch or cream tea (over the summer) on Thursdays at **12:30pm**.

## Banwell Youth Club

Banwell Youth Club continues to be outsourced to YMCA Dulverton who have been running a series of fun activities on **Tuesdays** between **6:30pm and 8:30pm**. Activities over the last year have included Halloween parties, pancake races, cooking, sports, games, music and more. New members are always welcome. See the Banwell Youth Club Facebook page for more details: [www.facebook.com/banwell youth club](http://www.facebook.com/banwell youth club).



## You Can Do I.T & Tea & Tech



'You Can Do I.T.' and 'Tea & Tech' were launched by the Parish Council to support people of all ages improve their I.T. skills over a cup of tea. Sessions continue to be held three times a month at Banwell Youth & Community Centre, 2-4pm, Thursdays twice a month and Tuesdays once a month.

Sessions are free for all. Thank you to all the volunteers who have helped run the sessions although we are looking for more. We look forward to helping more people enhance their I.T. skills in 2025 and beyond!

## Banwell Food Bank

Banwell Parish Council continues to run a foodbank on behalf of Weston Foodbank from the Youth and Community Centre, West Street. We would like to thank members of the community for the donations of food and money that have been received. Non-perishable food items are still being accepted and can be dropped in between 10 and 12 Tuesday and Thursday morning to the Youth & Community Centre or by phoning Liz 01934 820442 to arrange a more convenient time.

## Walking Buddies Scheme

May is the National Walking Month and Banwell Parish Council is in full support. In 2020, the council started the walking buddy program which still operates although it has dwindled significantly. The scheme was set up to help pair residents up with a walking buddy. If you do not want to walk alone, we will be by your side. We have also signed up Walking Buddy Volunteers' to help people in Banwell to get out and about for a stroll around the village. You can contact the Environment and Biodiversity Officer to sign up to request a buddy or volunteer as a buddy.

## Better Health Walks



Banwell Parish Council continues to support the North Somerset Better Health Walks scheme by helping to promote the initiative directly within the community through noticeboards, local businesses, and community networks. The Council also supports the walks by providing a welcoming space afterwards, including free hot drinks and access to facilities, helping to encourage participation and create an opportunity for people to stay, chat, and connect with others after the walk. Residents are encouraged to take part in the Better Health Walk, which takes place on the first Monday of each month at 11:00am, starting from the Youth and Community Centre. The walk offers a simple and accessible way to become more active, meet others, and enjoy the local area,

## Banwell Book & Puzzle Swap



Looking for something new to read or a puzzle to solve? Running every Thursday and alternate Tuesdays from 10am to 1pm at the Banwell Youth & Community Centre, everyone is welcome to pop in, browse the shelves, and take home a book or puzzle. Stay for a while and enjoy a free cup of tea or coffee and a biscuit — whether you're reading, puzzling, or just having a chat, it's a great place to relax and connect.

## Wolvershill Working Groups

These new working groups have been running for two years and have met a number of times. They were established for a dual purpose. The first is to feed into North Somerset's Local Plan which has allocated the land at Wolvershill as a strategic planning site. The second is to feed into the creation of an overarching Master Plan for the new Development which will include design codes, green spaces, retail space, light industrial, schools, etc...

The Liaison Group consists of the Chair, Vice-chair, Chair of Planning and the Clerk who are working directly with North Somerset and the three main developers. The second Working Group includes more Parish Councillors and any members of the public wishing to become involved. The minutes of previous meetings can be found on our website. Keep an eye open on social media for the next meeting.



## Environment Workshops

This year, the Environment and Biodiversity officer ran a series of fantastic sessions with Banwell Youth Club, where young people got hands-on with nature-focused activities. Highlights included making bee hotels, where they hollowed out elder branches; a session exploring bugs in our soil through a microscope, supported by Garden Organic (as pictured); and a bat walk, where the children used bat detectors to search for bats and learn about these nocturnal creatures.

In addition to the work with Banwell Youth Club, hands-on, free workshops were held to engage residents with practical environmental activities. The Wildflower Seed Bomb workshop was well attended, with people of all ages making seed bombs to scatter in gardens and green spaces, providing food and habitat for pollinators. The Clothing Mending Workshop offered simple skills such as sewing on buttons, repairing small tears, and re-hemming clothes to extend their life.



## Environmental Working Group



The Environmental Working Group has been working to deliver long-lasting, positive improvements to the Parish council owned green spaces. Progress to date includes the installation of bat and swift boxes to support at risk local wildlife, a new hedge has been planted at the Youth and Community Centre by the 1<sup>st</sup> Banwell Scouting Group with support from Galliford Try. Plans are in place for additional hedge planting at the Recreation Ground, while locations are being explored for wildflower planting to enhance biodiversity. The group continues to focus on projects that benefit both the environment and the community. If you would like to get involved contact the Environment and Biodiversity Officer on [nature@banwellparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:nature@banwellparishcouncil.gov.uk).

## News

### Going Green: Solar Panels Battery Storage for our Community Buildings

Thanks to the support of the North Somerset Business Fund, the Parish Council has secured funding for solar panel battery storage which will service both the Youth & Community Centre and the Scout Building. Continuing the work to make our community buildings more sustainable and environmentally friendly.

### Building on Our Vision: Strategic Plan and Action Plan Updates (2026/27)

In 2024, we proudly launched our Parish Council's Strategic Plan for 2024–2029 — our roadmap for the future. Two years on, we're pleased to share that the Strategic Plan and accompanying Action Plan have both been reviewed and updated to reflect our progress and evolving priorities.

We've also refreshed our annual 2026/27 Action Plan, which outlines the specific steps we'll be taking this year towards our longer-term goals. These continue to focus on enhancing Parish Council-owned infrastructure, protecting our environment, engaging with our community, and supporting local businesses. You can find the updated plans on our website at <https://www.banwellparishcouncil.org.uk/parish-council/strategic-plan-2024-2029>, or contact the Clerk for a printed copy. We'd love to hear your thoughts as we continue this journey together — shaping a thriving and resilient future for our community.

### Domain Transition to .gov

In July 2025 we upgraded our website domain from .org to .gov to better reflect our role as a government organisation and to improve trust and security for all visitors. A comprehensive comms plan ensured parishioners were made aware of the change through social media posts and the quarterly newsletter.

### Saving Lives: Community Defibrillator Training

A new defibrillator has been purchased for the Mead Fields development and is due to be installed in May 2026. The plan is to hold a further four defibrillator training sessions at the Youth & Community Centre and Mead Fields — part of our commitment to community health and resilience.

Sudden cardiac arrest claims around 100,000 lives a year in the UK, but with timely use of a defibrillator, survival rates can dramatically improve. These sessions are designed to build knowledge and confidence in using an Automated External Defibrillator (AED).



## Celebrating Community Spirit: Volunteer of the Year 2026

This year's Volunteer of the Year award was presented posthumously in memory of Sonia Mitchell, in recognition of her outstanding contribution to village life.

Sonia gave her time generously to many aspects of the community, including fundraising for the church, organising events such as the Christmas Tree Festival and Harvest Supper, and playing an active role in the carnival. Through the Banwell Flower Club, she shared her skills and enthusiasm, more recently teaching others the art of flower arranging. She was also known for her kindness and willingness to help others, regularly providing lifts to appointments, church, and local groups, and offering companionship as a walking buddy. During COVID, she supported the community as a coordinator at Knightcott Gardens.

Sonia's quiet determination, superb organisational skills, and heart of gold made a lasting impact on the village. She will be greatly missed.

## Grants Given Out by the Parish Council in 2025/26

Did you know that local community groups and organisations can apply for a grant through the parish council? The following grants have been awarded to the following groups during the last 12 months:

- Minibus society: £1000
- Older Peoples Service: £2000
- Citizens Advice £3973.23 to enable an outreach service for the Parish.
- Air Ambulance £200
- Banwell Village Market £194

## Banwell E-Newsletter

As well as the Parish Council's quarterly update in the parish magazine, we have a digital E-Newsletter to keep you up to date on Banwell news. To sign up, head to [www.banwellparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.banwellparishcouncil.org.uk) and fill in the pop-up form. We always welcome feedback, so do let us know what you think of the newsletter.

## Keeping You in The Know

As a Parish Council we are always looking to ensure our parishioners are kept up to date with the latest decisions by the Council and are aware of the wider issues impacting those who reside and work within our Parish. There are multiple ways you can contact your Parish Council:

- Call us on 01934 820442.
- Email us on [comms@banwellparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:comms@banwellparishcouncil.gov.uk) / [Clerk@banwellparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:Clerk@banwellparishcouncil.gov.uk)
- Website [www.banwellparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.banwellparishcouncil.gov.uk)
- Visit us at Banwell Youth & Community Centre Tues & Thurs 10am-12noon
- Follow Banwell Parish Council's Facebook (@banwellparishcouncil)
- Send us a letter to Banwell Parish Council Youth and Community Centre, West Street, Banwell, BS29 6BD.
- Attend a Council meeting online or in person (watch on Facebook live)
- View the village noticeboards (entrance to West Street Carpark and the Rec)
- Subscribe to our YouTube Channel

## Parish Office

The Parish Office is located at the Youth & Community Centre (at the bottom of West Street Carpark adjacent to the Scout Hut) and is open to parishioners on **Tuesdays & Thursdays 10am until 12 noon** – no appointment needed. The Clerk or Environment & Biodiversity Officer are more than happy to see you by prior arrangement if this is not convenient. Call (01934) 820442, email [clerk@banwellparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@banwellparishcouncil.gov.uk) or [admin@banwellparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:admin@banwellparishcouncil.gov.uk)