**What services does it provide?**

Baildon Town Council has an overall responsibility for the well-being of its local community. Its work falls into three main categories:

* representing the local community
* delivering services to meet local needs
* striving to improve quality of life in the Town

A Town Council might provide and/or maintain some of the following services:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * allotments
* burial grounds
* car parks
* community transport schemes
* footpaths
 | * bridleways
* bus shelters
* library services
* crime reduction measures
* leisure facilities
 |
| * litter bins
* local youth projects
* open spaces
* public toilets
* planning consultation
 | * street cleaning
* street lighting
* tourism activities
* village greens
 |

**How does it make decisions?**

Baildon Town Council is made up of a number of councillors who meet regularly to make decisions on the work and direction of the Council. As an elected body, the Town Council is the first level of local government and, through its councillors, is responsible to the people it represents – that’s the local community.

Baildon Town Council has a number of committees which feed information and resolutions into the Full Council for decisions and policy making. These are;

1. The Economy Committee
2. The Environment Committee
3. The Community Committee

Attending a council or committee meeting is the best way to find out what it does. Meetings are advertised together with the relevant papers on our website. Have a look at the other pages on the website to see what the Town Council has been dealing with recently.

**Where does it get its money from?**

Each year the Town Council asks for a sum of money, called a ‘precept’, which is collected through your council tax. This money is used by the Town Council to improve facilities and services for local people and run the Council. Town Councils can also apply for grants and loans.

**How are Town Councillors elected?**

Town Councillors are elected to represent a geographical area known as a ward. They are elected by people who live in that ward. Baildon is divided into six wards with two councillors in each, therefore, Baildon Town Council has twelve elected Councillors.

**What do Town Councillors do?**

Councillors have four main areas of work:

1. Decision-making: through attending meetings and committees with other elected members, councillors decide which activities to support, where money should be spent, what services should be delivered and what policies should be implemented;
2. Monitoring: councillors make sure that their decisions lead to efficient and effective services by keeping an eye on how well things are working;
3. Getting involved locally: as local representatives, councillors have responsibilities towards their residents and local organisations. This often depends on what the councillor wants to achieve and how much time is available.
4. Advocating, on behalf of individuals or Baildon as a whole, to Bradford District Council and other bodies e.g. Yorkshire Water, The Environmental Agency,etc.

The day-to-day work of a councillor may include:

* going to meetings of local organisations
* going to meetings of bodies that affect the wider community, such as the police, the Highways Authority, schools and colleges
* bringing Baildon residents’ concerns to the attention of the Council
* Contributing to council committees and working groups

**Could I be a Town Councillor?**

As a councillor you can become a voice for your community and affect real change. It helps if you're a "people person" who enjoys talking to other residents but, more importantly, you need to have the concerns and best interests of the Town as a whole at heart. Councillors are community leaders and should represent the aspirations of the public that they serve.

Town Councils are the most local part of our democratic system and are closest to the public. Why don’t you stand for Baildon Town Council and see what difference you can make to your local community?

**How much time does it take up & when?**

On average, less than a couple of hours a week. Obviously there are some councillors who spend more time than this – and some less, but in the main, being a Town Councillor is an enjoyable way of contributing to your community and helping to make it a better place to live and work. Council meetings are always held in the evening – as are most meetings of the other groups which councillors attend on the Council’s behalf. Council working groups sometimes meet in the daytime if the meeting needs working people to attend. Talking and listening to your fellow Baildoners can be done at any time but you must be able to spend a couple of hours every six to eight weeks (in the evening) attending the Council meeting.

**Am I qualified?**

Most people are, however there are a few basic rules. You have to be:

* a British citizen, or a citizen of the Commonwealth or the European Union, and
* 18 years or older on the day you become nominated for election, and
* live or work in or near Baildon.