

Council Office
The Beehive
Dowell Street
Honiton
EX14 1LZ

16th July 2025

Charter Day has always been planned and organised by a hard-working and dedicated army of local volunteers. In recent years a smaller number of volunteers have had to put in a lot more work to maintain the high standard. However, the Charter Day Planning Group will not operate after the 2025 and has asked (May 2025) the Town Council if it wants to take on responsibility for Charter Day from and including the July 2026 event.

The Town Council has decided that it should initially ask the Honiton community if there is a well-established voluntary group that is interested in taking the show forward.

Below is attached a short description of most of what is needed to arrange Charter Day and operate the annual event. Although it would be for any organising group to determine its specification of work to plan and manage the event on the day, the specification below is only intended to be an example. The organising group would not be part of, overseen by or a sub-committee of the Town Council but a group independent of the Town Council.

If you or a well-established voluntary group is interested in planning and operating Charter Day from (and including) July 2026, then please can you contact the Town Council to express your interest by Friday 5 September 2025.

Your faithfully,

Stephen Hill
Town Clerk



The Beehive, Dowell Street, Honiton, EX14 1LZ
Clerk@honiton.gov.uk



Background

1. Charter Day is an annual celebration of the Honiton Market Charter.
2. The original Market Charter was first issued in 1257 King Henry III and by King Edward III in 1368.
3. In April 2009 the Market Charter was assigned to Honiton Town Council from East Devon District Council (EDDC).
4. In 2007 the first (Market) Charter Day was established and included £10k funding from the Lottery. The Charter Day Planning Group was established with funding from Honiton Town Council until 2022, from when the Planning Group has been awarded Grant from the Town Council.
5. In 2022 the Planning Group approved a constitution, and it is unclear if it was established as, for example, a Community Interest Company.
6. From humble beginnings, Charter Day has become a significant annual community event and celebration, not least thanks to the immense efforts of the voluntary Planning Group, its Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer and army of volunteers. The Charter Day voluntary Planning Group including Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary are stepping down.
7. Charter Day is a busy community event and celebration, impacting the whole of Honiton and takes place at Allhallows (EDDC owned), Mackarness Hall and St Paul's church.

Specification

8. At present Charter Day occupies Allhallows field (owned by EDDC), Silver Street, Northcote Lane, outside St Paul's and the Mackarness Hall and coincides with the Town Council's Market at High Street.
9. There are a number of events including shop window displays and judging, a significant number of stalls and hundreds of visitors to the day's event. There's been a dog show (with prizes) and car show. Food and drink vendors are present and need to check their insurance and licenses.
10. Checking charities and businesses attendance, arranging insurance, risk assessments, providing toilets, PRS license and announcer are needed.
11. Booking and coordinating with performers at Allhallows, St Paul's and Mackarness Hall is required
12. Signage needs to be purchased and displayed.
13. Any road closure needs to be applied for and directed/managed.
14. Permissions are required not least from EDDC for use of its Allhallows field and Devon County Council acting as Highway Authority.
15. There is a significant amount of voluntary work done by the Planning Group including, and in addition to the above, coordination meetings and managing/operating the event on the day.
16. Honiton's annual Charter Day is usually a Saturday in July.
17. Income has been made by the Town Council, fundraising and event stallholders.
18. liaison with the events (e.g. car show, dog show, businesses and charities attending); book and coordinate performers and their time slots for Allhallows field, Northcote Lane, Mackarness Hall and front of St Paul's church
19. arranging prizes.
20. applying for and managing road closure.
21. event fund and costs (financial and accountancy) management and money handling.
22. coordinate and book the Allhallows field, insurance, toilets, risk management, PRS licence, John Capon (announcer), hay bales, Mackarness Hall, front of St Pauls et al
23. booking food and drink vendors, checking insurance and applications.
24. ordering signage and displaying said signage
25. on the day itself event management from 07:00-17:00 arranging the field and paying people
26. monthly meetings as a minimum
27. about up to 10 volunteers on the day helping with signposting, car parking, rubbish clearance, allocating spaces, marking out Northcote Lane and helping vendors.

