

Annual Report 22 – 23

Adroddiad Blynnyddol 22 - 23

Hay Town Council

Cyngor Tref y Gelli Gandryll



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1. **Hay Town Council**

Hay Town Council has 11 councillors (when there are no vacancies) and one member of administrative staff. The mayor, who is also the leader of the council, is chosen by the councillors.

The full council meets monthly, usually on the first Monday of the month, unless this falls on a Bank Holiday. The council also has five sub committees who meet every 1-2 months depending on requirements. Where possible we allocate councillors to sub committees that make the best use of their knowledge and experience.

The operation of the council is governed by a set of Standing Orders that cover, for example, how often the council meets and the conduct of meetings. Councillors are also governed by a set of Financial Regulations which provide guidance on accounting procedures and how councils may spend their money.

The Council employs one member of part time staff, our Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer. You can contact our clerk on townclerk@haytowncouncil.gov.uk or 01497 808109

All Hay Town Council Full Council meetings are held at the Council Offices, Brecon Road unless otherwise stated on our website and on the noticeboard outside Council Offices.

Members of the public are welcome to attend these meetings. Agendas are available on our website at three clear days prior to meetings.

Sub Committees - Our 5 Sub Committees are Finance; Premises; Estates, Communications, and Town Events.

Minutes of all our Full Council meetings can be found on our website: www.haytowncouncil.gov.uk

2. **Chair's report – Cllr Fiona Howard.**

The council year began last May with Cllr Debbie Landymore becoming Mayor. Debbie was very excited about her new role and had many plans for the council. Initially, this also included taking on all the work of the town clerk who had resigned in May due to ill health. This extra work continued until our present clerk, Claire Bunton, was appointed in August.

One of Debbie's first projects was planning for the Queen's jubilee. This was a mammoth task, involving many different groups in the town, and culminated in afternoon tea for the senior citizens of Hay followed by the lighting of the beacon at the castle, watched by a large crowd in the memorial square. Amongst Debbie's other projects was facilitating better access for the pavilion including now weekly visits from Brecon foodbank.



Sadly, Debbie's health deteriorated until, in November she was rushed into hospital where she stayed until April. To help her to recover, with no extra distractions, Debbie resigned in March. We all miss her and her dedication to the council and the town, and we all wish her the very best for the future.

There have also been a number of other changes to the council this year. We now have a full complement of councillors, a first for a long time! As stated previously, we have new clerk, Claire Bunton, who has also taken on the role of Financial Officer. Claire is, at present,

studying for a CiLCA qualification, which is designed to help understand the legal framework of the council and manage council activities and finances.

Throughout the year the council have continued working with the community and its partners on a number of projects and activities to improve the well-being of the people of Hay.

We have regular meetings with the Chamber of Commerce, Hay Markets, the Castle and the Festival. This is to help ensure events such as the Festival and the Turning on of the Lights run as smoothly and successfully as possible.

We have introduced permanent parking spaces at the pavilion car park which allows car owners to have their own car parking space that can be locked when not in use. If you wish to purchase one of these spaces please contact our clerk.

This is just a small view of what goes on in the council. Most of the work is undertaken by the very active sub-committees we have, all of which have outlined the work they have undertaken this year and their future plans in their own reports.

Over the year we as councillors have all come to recognise the hard work done by all councillors, particularly when working in sub committees. For this reason, we have agreed to trial not having a mayor for the coming year. There will be an overall chair for council meetings who will attend sub committees. At full council subcommittee chairs will report on their progress in achieving their goals and on their budgets. Council will agree which councillor should represent the town council at events.



3. External Membership

Hay Town Council benefits enormously from being a member of One Voice Wales, which is the main representative body for community and town councils in Wales. One Voice Wales ensures a strong voice to represent the interests of councils and offers a range of quality services to support their work. By being a member, the Town Council is able to benefit from legal advice, advice on how to improve services, training, policy matters, information in a monthly newsletter and also attendance at conferences which provide networking opportunities and sharing good practice in the sector.

The Council elects two members to attend One Voice Wales's Regional Committee which meets regularly during the year. Additionally, the Clerk is a member of the "Society of Local Council Clerks" SLCC which is a source of information and good practice in the sector and which also offers training courses and conferences.

The Town Council elects members to other external bodies, namely:

Gwynne's Almshouses; Dial a Ride; Dyfed Powys Police; Hay School Governors; One Voice Wales; Cheesemarket; Hay2Timbuktu; BBNP; Chamber of Commerce; Hay Summer Show; Hay Markets; Hay Sports Clubs; Hay Youth Club.

4. Accountability

Hay Town Council has adopted a member's code of conduct and a register of interests is kept for each member. Each councillor must declare any interest they have in items to be discussed at the start of each meeting and these are noted in the minutes.

The Town Council is audited by internal and external auditors annually. The internal audit is undertaken by the David Jones & Partners Accountants and the External Audit by the Wales Audit Office.

5. Finance Sub Committee Annual Report – Cllr Simon Morris.

Hay Town Council sets a budget annually and monitors expenditure against budget throughout the financial year by receiving a regular report from the Clerk.

Summary of Income and Expenditure 2022/23

HAY TOWN COUNCIL - Comparison Actual Vs BUDGET/ PRECEPT					
Division	Detail	Budget		Actual Expenditure	Actual Income
		2022/23		31/03/2023	31/03/2023
Income					
	Income Bank Interest				86.70
	Income from Precept & Powys				66290.27
	VAT refund				11569.39
	Income from Toilet Entry Charge				21656.84
	Paid Parking - income				1358.35
	Refund from Welsh Water				20.00
	Christmas Lights				2421.40
	Fishing				400.00
	Pavilion Room Hire				420.00
	Queens Platinum Jubilee				10103.69

	Petty Cash				240.00
General					
	Clerk / RFO / Admin Assistant salaries	32235		26818.39	
	Mayor's allowance & fund	1000		460.00	
	Stationery/Office costs / Scribe	1800		1940.10	
	Telephone/internet / website	1320		723.04	
	Accountant/Audit Fees	2300		1665.00	
	Communications & Advertising	1000		908.84	
	Town Crier	250		125.00	
	Town Clock	400		500.00	
	Election costs (Reserve)	250		664.59	
	Insurance	1500		2174.71	
	Subscriptions	400		772.00	
	Bank Charges	300		535.36	
	Training	400		525.00	
	Expenses (£150 Cllr expenses)	1750		1975.00	
	Petty Cash	0		215.47	
Land Maintenance					
	Grass Cutting	3000		3456.00	
	Maintenance - General	500		1012.00	
	Tree Management	3000		1476.00	
	Cemetery			3024.00	
	Legal & Other up front costs / ATM	2000		1615.00	
Toilets					
	Cleaning/Maintenance	24000		26460.51	
	Water Rates	2000		3537.35	
	Electricity	1500		2733.12	
Recreation Car Park/Play Area					
	Car Park/Play area Maintenance	1000		0	
	Paid Parking - Costs to set up	5000		4326.37	
council offices/recreation facilities					
	Rates	3300		3210	
	Water	800		1020.16	
	Gas	400		1220.76	
	Electricity	1300		3189.94	
	Buildings Maintenance	500		3399.45	
	Statutory Testing	2250		984	
	Cleaning			477	
Town Events Expenses					
	Snr Citizens party	250		0	
	Christmas Lights	1000		3000	
	Citizens award	250		189	
	Calendar of Events support	1000		0	
	Queens Jubilee			6967.64	
Grants Donations					

	Grants from General Fund	1500		0	
	Grant to WMG re Dog litter bins	1500		1550	
	Cleaning Recycling Area	600		550	
		Budget		Expenditure	Income
	Totals	101555		113400.8	114326.64

The Town Council is audited by internal and external auditors annually. The internal audit is undertaken by DM Jones & Partners Accountants and the External Audit by the Wales Audit Office.

The main source of income for HTC is the precept which is set annually and presented to Powys County Council in January for the following financial year. The precept is collected on behalf of HTC by Powys County Council and is the only source of tax revenue available to Town and Community Councils.

The process of deciding on the level of precept includes the preparation of a draft budget on the basis of the financial situation of the Town Council by considering the likely costs, plans for projects, setting an amount for contributions - within the guidelines published annually - and any other financial matters. Consideration is also given to the reserves held by the Town Council to ensure an appropriate precept is set.

A total of £113,400.80 was spent in the year, including the Lottery Grant. The ongoing costs of the cemetery are being taken from the reserves and we expect that project to be finished in the next financial year. The Town Council reclaims the VAT paid for goods and services during the year annually, £11569.39 was repaid for the year 2021/22.

6. Estates Sub Committee – Cllr Jeff Morgan.

Hay Town Council, Estates Sub-Committee has responsibility for managing land owned or leased by the council and has to comply with statutory legislation e.g., Occupiers Liability Act 1957 & 1984 which covers duty of care to the public, Environment (Wales) Act 2016 covering biodiversity. This land comprises of the Old Railway and Bailey Walk footpaths, The Gliss riverside area, Black Lion Green, Gypsy Castle play area, Brecon Road car park, play area and recreational facilities, plus various grassed areas around the town.

Regular maintenance of woodland is done by members of Hay Community Woodland Group, who carry out regular inspections for dead, diseased and dangerous trees along the footpaths, reporting back to HTC on any work they cannot do. Grass cutting is done by contractors, the work going out to tender every two years.

Having monitored the footpath trees over a number of years, ash dieback was identified as well as the ever-present Dutch Elm disease. In the late summer of 2022, it was decided to commission an ash dieback survey which identified many diseased trees. Having this information, provided by a qualified professional, allowed HTC to apply to BBNPA for planning permission to fell trees, under our duty of care to the public. This was necessary as the majority of trees are in the Hay on Wye Conservation Area, plus consent to work from Natural Resources Wales was needed as some trees were in the River Wye SSSI/SAC. With these applications passed, tenders were sent out to contractors qualified to do the work, with this being completed by the end of March 2023.



Brecon Road car park has been white lined, with annual paid parking spaces available, these have been particularly popular with residents who do not have any parking outside their homes. It is planned that all other spaces in this car park will become hourly paid in the future, managed by a parking control company.

We still have isolated cases of dog fouling on the footpaths, although it is nowhere near as bad as prior to the four red bins being installed in 2016. So, if you have a dog, please be responsible and do the right thing, "bag it, bin it".

Following the chaos and many complaints from residents, near The Gliss, about canoe companies, that ensued in 2021, HTC took steps to provide a canoe only area at the landing and launch site. This has proved highly successful and as far as I'm aware no complaints were received in 2022.

Could I remind all, with properties backing onto HTC owned land, that it is an offence to tip garden waste or rubbish over your fence, it's classed as fly tipping and as well as being illegal it also has a negative impact on biodiversity. It is particularly disappointing to see garden waste continually dumped on the riverbank at The Gliss, this, along with all of the River Wye, is a Site of Special Scientific Interest and Special Area of Conservation, when the culprit is identified we will have no choice but to report these actions to the appropriate authorities.



October 2022 also saw the installation of the final piece in the carving trail, a red kite located near Warren Cottage, by local chainsaw artist Danny Thomas. The concept for the carving trail was from an idea by Hay Community Woodland Group who also managed and funded the work. A highly successful project that showcases local

wildlife, delighting residents and visitors alike, especially children.

As well as these larger projects it is always a pleasure to work with residents on ideas that add to the community, such as a memorial bench to be situated at Black Lion Green in memory of Colin Price.

Cllr Jeff Morgan (Chair of Estates) together with Cllrs Fiona Howard, Alan Powell & Alex Bielski

7. Premises Sub Committee – Cllr Robert Golesworthy.

During the past year the Fishing and Estates subcommittee was split to form two separate subcommittees, Estates, and Premises. Estates now deals with land assets of the council, whilst Premises exclusively deals with the buildings.

Over the last year The Pavilion has been internally decorated where required, has had all services checked and serviced where appropriate. we would like to remind all that the Sports Pavilion is available for hire. We're pleased that Hay Youth Club, Brecon Foodbank and Hay Scouts are already using this space. Facilities include chairs, tables, a kitchen and toilets. The standard rate is £20 for a half day or evening and £40 for a full day, local charities may be eligible for a discounted rate. Please contact the Town Clerk should you wish to hire.

We are still responsible for the management of the two toilet blocks, at the clock tower and Oxford Road. Unfortunately, over the last year the toilet blocks have been subject to mindless vandalism which has led to these facilities being out of order for extended periods of time. Councillors have worked hard to try and ensure a satisfactory level of cleanliness and repair but have been thwarted by the above technical and mechanical problems. We have now employed a local independent cleaner ensure these facilities are kept clean and usable for all our residents and visitors.

8. Communications Sub Committee – Cllr Jade Hall.

As a Subcommittee we are responsible for keeping our residents up to date with what Hay Town Council have been doing, and our future plans. We aim to promote all our businesses and public events so all residents have the opportunity to be involved and heard.

We use various platforms to do this including our website, wye local articles, our Facebook page, and public meetings.

Over the last year we have been focused on utilizing our Facebook page, not only to share Hay Town Council news but to also share information about the town's wonderful community groups and local news and events. Thanks to the hard work of Councillor Phoebe Jenkins who has been championing our social media from January 1st our likes and follows have increased on Facebook by 66.7%, our page reach has increased to 4.8k, up by 346% and page visits have increased by 44.5%. We continue to work on our social media input and if there are things you would like to see more of, please email the Town Clerk to share your suggestions at townclerk@haytowncouncil.gov.uk .

We are currently looking into once again producing a quarterly newsletter and we are hoping to roll this out within the next couple of months. Please keep an eye on our website and Facebook page for updates.

9. Events Sub Committee - Cllr Jade Hall.

The Events Subcommittee meets throughout the year to plan events run by Hay Town Council. Over the last year we have had a rather varied range of events, the two main ones of course being The Platinum Jubilee and the Christmas lights switch on.

The Platinum Jubilee celebrations took place in June last year across three days and included the official lighting of the beacon, a family fun day at the Pavilion on Brecon Road, and a community lunch in the Market Square car park. We would like to give a huge thank you to all residents, community groups and local businesses who supported the weekend of events, the festivities could not have gone ahead without it.

This year Hay Town Council teamed up with The Chamber of Commerce and Hay Markets to keep our Christmas lights on, everyone worked extremely hard to add some extra fun and flare and extended the Christmas lights switch on to have a market across the weekend, a snow machine, and off course it wouldn't have been complete without a visit from Santa's steam engine! A big well done to everyone who planned the weekend and thank you to everyone who made donations to keep this wonderful community event going.

Off course a key part of the Christmas lights switch on was the presentation of the Citizen of the Year awards, congratulations to Trish Kiddle who was awarded Citizen of the Year and Hay Community Woodland Group who won the Group of the year Award. Nominations for this year's awards will open in July so it's not too early to start thinking of who you might like to nominate.

I would be remiss if I did not mention an event that not only affected Hay, but the Nation. The passing of her late Majesty the Queen. As a Council we were saddened by the loss and felt deeply touched to see our community come together and support one another through the period of mourning. Off course the passing of Her Late Majesty means as I write this report, we are preparing for the coronation of His Majesty King Charles the Third, our coronation plans albeit not as grand as the Jubilee weekend aim to raise spirits and bring our community together and I personally am looking forward to seeing all the fantastic window displays that are popping up around town by local businesses and residents!

Thank you again to all the volunteers and organization's that have helped to make our town events programme so successful and we look forward to seeing you again in the coming year for future events.

Photo courtesy of
Emily Daw

