



BRIDPORT TOWN COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

2007-2008



Our Fifth Annual Report

This is our fifth Annual Report but the first one for the new Town Council elected in May 2007, which I was honoured to be asked to serve as Leader. The past year has been a particularly busy and eventful year, one in which Bridport Town Council has demonstrated even more strongly its willingness and desire to undertake initiatives for the benefit of the town and not just function as a reactive body. The many and varied activities of the Council are covered in detail in the Town Clerk's report below.

*Charles Wild, Leader,
Bridport Town Council*

Report on Town Council Activities 2007-08

This report outlines some of the activities undertaken by the Town Council over the municipal year May 2007 to May 2008. Updated information will be provided in bulletins issued over the course of the year.

Allotments: New allotments have been provided at Skilling and at the rear of South Street. Discussions are ongoing to release further land for allotments at Rivervale Flaxhayes, St Swithins and elsewhere in the town. Magna Housing has been very helpful in working with the Town Council to make land available for allotments. The Bridport and District Allotments Society acts as a helpful link between allotment holders and the Town Council.

Asker Meadows: This important green space amenity continues to be well used by local people. The Circus, Food Festival and Carnival Fair were again pleased to be allowed to use the meadows for their popular events. The site, together with the adjoining land owned by WDDC, is designated as a Nature Reserve and is managed through a Stewardship Agreement with DEFRA.

Bridport Football Partnership: The Town Council is involved in the project to build new changing rooms for the Football Club, which will also be used by teams playing on St Mary's. The Town Council approved £25,000 for the scheme.

Bridport Local Area Partnership: BLAP continues to be a great success. Achievements over the past year include the production of a well received guide for parishes on approaches to delivering affordable housing, establishing a Bridport Area Health Forum, and producing surveys on recycling and access problems for young people. Two key projects over the past year have been work on the delivery of a Bridport Skills Centre and a Community Needs Survey.

CCTV: The CCTV contract with the Weymouth and Portland Borough Council has been renewed for a further 12 months. Over the coming year, a further review will look at options to extend the coverage of the present system.

Cemetery: The Town Council often receives favourable comments about the helpfulness of staff at the Cemetery, which is very well used for both people within and outside the parish. The management of the Cemetery is to be reviewed over the next year to ensure that it continues to function effectively and efficiently.

Consultation: The Town Council responded to a large number of consultation exercises from national and local government over the past year, ensuring that the views of the town are taken into consideration on a variety of matters. This has recently included the Review of Day Care Services, the District Council's Access Strategy, Review of Library Services, and the Sustainable Communities Act.

Environment Committee: The Town Council is making full use of new powers to promote energy saving. The Council's Environment and Social Wellbeing Committee now has its own budget and agreed to hold what proved to be a successful week of events on the theme of Climate Change and Energy Saving. It received approval for the Council to sign the Nottingham Declaration and adopt a Climate Change Policy.

Finances: Budgetary control, financial management and town councillor scrutiny have ensured that the Town Council's accounts are in a healthy condition. The Best Value, Scrutiny and Town Plan Sub Committee receives reports on all aspects of the financial management of the Council.

Flaxhayes: The Town Council is on the Steering Group progressing the scheme to deliver over 50 affordable houses.

Grants: The Town Council provides financial assistance to a range of organisations and community groups. The major organisations i.e. Arts Centre, Citizens' Advice Bureau, Museum and the Leisure Centre received a total of £14,000 and 26 smaller community organisations received £9,000, giving a total of £23,000.

Highway Maintenance Partnership: The Town Council works in partnership with Dorset County Council, to provide improved street lighting, traffic management, pedestrian crossings and maintain the highway trees in the town.

Highways And Transportation Sub Committee: Through the mechanism of this Sub Committee, the Town Council is able to promote its views to the relevant authorities regarding highways and transport issues. The Sub Committee considered a large number of issues over the year and agreed to support a wide ranging review of town centre traffic measures. The implementation of a Park and Ride scheme during the busy summer holiday period proved a great success and is being repeated this year. This project is delivered in partnership with West Dorset District Council.

Market: It was another good year with an average of 35 stalls on Wednesdays and 80 on Saturdays. The market is very important in that it brings so many people into the town. It also provides an important income stream for the Town Council. The Town Council increased its advertising of the market and introduced new signage. The Council agreed to phase out the use of plastic bags on the market.

Mountfield/Millennium Green: The Town Council continues to support the popular gardens, meadow and woodland, all of which are open to the public. New railings were introduced for the steps at Mountfield and an improved Bandstand was also established on the Millennium Green. As part of the environmental improvements to the Mountfield building, a partition was installed on the ground floor, as an energy saving measure.

New Zealand and Land at Priory Lane: The Town Council is working to ensure the transfer of land at these two sites, to enable them to be managed for the benefit of the local community. It is hoped that an open space/nature reserve will be established at the New Zealand site and a community orchard at the Priory Lane site.

Outdoor Amenities: The Council's outside staff continue to maintain the cemetery, amenity areas, play areas, and football pitches in excellent condition. The River Platforms at St Mary's Playing Fields are being upgraded to improve access for people with disabilities. There has been additional work at the Borough Gardens, including installation of security measures and refurbishment of the seats.

Planning: The Town Council is a consultee for planning applications. Over the past year 184 applications were considered and comments passed to West Dorset District Council, ensuring that the views of the area are taken into consideration before a decision is made.

Play Areas: This year the ongoing programme to upgrade the safety surfacing has continued. The options for a play area in West Bay are being reviewed.

Riverside Gardens: The freehold for the Riverside Gardens has now been transferred to the Town Council.

Salt House: The Town Council lets this building as a community facility. Over the past year, this has been a very popular venue, with a large number of bookings.

Town Hall: Work continues on the development of the plans for the refurbishment and renovation of the Town Hall. The proposals provide a wonderful opportunity to improve public access, explore the interpretation of the Fra Newbery paintings and to relate this fine listed building to Bucky Doo Square. It is intended to submit a bid for Heritage Lottery Funding later this year. The Heritage Forum, working in partnership with the Town Council and supported by the District and County Councils, put on the very successful Fra Newbery exhibition in April.

Town Hall Toilets: Following the withdrawal of funding by West Dorset District Council, the Town Council now pays for the full running costs of the public toilets at the Town Hall. As part of the Town Hall renovation project, the District Council has given a commitment to look at alternative town centre locations for the toilets, to allow the ground floor to be opened up for community use.

Town Plan: The Bridport and West Bay Town Plan is in its third year and will be reviewed over the coming year. It provides a framework for the development of the Council's future policies, schemes and formulation of budgets.

West Bay Sea Angling Jetty: The Town Council fully supported the work of the Steering Group, established to investigate the options for an angling jetty. Officers worked hard on this project over the years, but in the end costs, safety considerations and the viability of establishing a Trust, meant that the Steering Group reluctantly decided to abandon the project. The Town Council agreed to retain its budget allocation for the scheme to support the efforts to identify possible alternative angling provision.

West Bay Methodist Chapel: The Town Council is working with the District Council to seek to identify community uses for this building.

Conclusion: I hope this shows that, in addition to delivering its services, the Town Council has been able to accomplish a lot of projects over the past year. Where the Town Council does not directly deliver a service, as with highways, it seeks to work with the service providers to ensure that the town's voice is heard and considered. Town and parish councils are being given new powers to act on behalf of their communities and through the efficiency of the staff and the vision and ambition of the councillors, the Town Council is in a good position to take advantage of these new powers.

Bob Gillis
Town Clerk

The Civic Year

I was very honoured to be elected Town Mayor for a fifth term for the municipal year 2007/08. Some of the highlights were the wonderful attendance at the November Remembrance Parade and Service, the return of the late night Christmas Shopping event and towards the end of my year in office, I was very pleased to attend the 60th anniversary Royal Air Force Association celebrations in March. The Fra Newbery trail was a magnificent way to finish my year in office and it was pleasing to see people coming to the Town Hall to view the paintings and murals and to appreciate, many for the first time, this impressive building. Those are just some of the highlights from what has been a very enjoyable year. I consider myself very lucky to have been able to serve the town once again. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everybody who has helped me over the year. This includes my escorts and my deputy mayor, Councillor Frances McKenzie.

Councillor Geoffrey Ackerman
Town Mayor 2007-08

Bridport Town Council

Bridport Town Council is the parish authority for the town of Bridport. It is the fourth tier of government after Parliament, the County Council and the District Council. Its legal powers are granted to it and regulated by various pieces of Government legislation. The Town Council supplements the provision of local government services in Bridport and provides a range of social and recreational facilities, while promoting and representing the town with other national and statutory bodies.

The Town Council offices are at
Mountfield, Rax Lane, Bridport, Dorset DT6 3JP.
Tel. no. 01308 456722
Fax no. 01308 456112
Email address: enquiries@bridport-tc.gov.uk
Website: www.bridport-tc.gov.uk

The Council's offices are open Monday to Friday,
8.30 am–5.00 pm (Friday 8.30 am–4.30 pm).

Staff

Town Clerk: Bob Gillis
Town Surveyor: Daryl Chambers
Office Manager: Paul Fuszard
Community Planning Officer: Tessa Greenaway
Administrative Officer: Linda Bullock
Office Staff: Jill Cox, Steven Yarde
Caretaker: Colin Divall
Senior Groundsman: Robert Goodland
Groundsman: Sean Coombs
Groundsman and Market Superintendent: Ray McLaren
Cemetery Superintendent: Paul Pinkett

The Town Mayor, the Deputy Mayor, the Leader, and Committee Chairmen

The Town Mayor is elected annually by fellow councillors. The Town Mayor for the year 2008-09 is Councillor Martin Ray, and his deputy is Councillor Geoffrey Ackerman. Councillor Charles Wild was re-elected Leader of the Council in May 2008. The three main committees are chaired by Councillor Maggie Ray (Finance and General Purposes), Councillor Ros Kayes (Plans) and Councillor Dave Rickard (Environment and Social Wellbeing).

The Council and its Committees

The full Council oversees all the activities of the Town Council. It appoints three main committees - Plans, Finance & General Purposes, and Environment & Social Wellbeing. These are supported by a number of sub-committees and working groups.

The Town Council meets six times a year at 7.00 pm on a Tuesday. The Plans Committee meets monthly on Mondays. The Finance and General Purposes and Environment and Social Wellbeing committees meet on Wednesdays, four or five times a year each. The sub-committees meet quarterly.

Agendas are normally issued seven clear days before the meetings and are posted on public notice boards throughout the town and on the council's website (www.bridport-tc.gov.uk).

The press and public are welcome to attend all committee, sub committee and full Council meetings and the public may put questions or make statements on any matter in a 30 minute public period at the beginning of each committee and full Council meeting. Members of the public and press are only asked to depart if there are any confidential items on the agenda and this is normally dealt with as the last business of the meeting.

The minutes are available within ten working days following the meeting. The minutes are not a verbatim account of the meeting, but detail the decisions and recommendations made. They are available to the public and can be found at the library, at the Council offices at Mountfield and on the Town Council website. They are also circulated to the various local media organisations.

Town Councillors

Bridport's eighteen town councillors represent the two wards in the town. They are elected every four years. The last election was in May 2007. The next election will be held in May 2011. The town councillors for each ward are as follows:

North Ward:

Councillor Miss S.A. Brown, 67 North Allington DT6 5DZ;
tel: 01308-423078
Councillor N. K. Cast, 217 St Andrews Road DT6 3BT
tel: 01308 456861
Councillor Ms R.C. Kayes, Honeylands, Long Bredy DT2 9JB
tel: 07792 553010
Councillor P.J. Lathey, 5 Allington Mead DT6 5HF
tel: 01308-458125
Councillor Ms F.K. McKenzie, 204 Orchard Avenue DT6 5RL
tel: 01308-425068
Councillor M.P. Parsons, 3 Sparacre Gardens DT6 3NB
tel: 01308 456697
Councillor C.M. Ray, 9 St Andrews Road DT6 3BG
tel: 01308-459095
Councillor Mrs M.J. Ray, 9 St Andrews Road DT6 3BG
tel: 01308-459095
Councillor R.J. Stoodley, 88 St Andrews Rd DT6 3BL
tel: 01308-456797

South Ward:

Councillor G.J. Ackerman, 31 Crock Lane DT6 4DF
tel. 01308-458098
Councillor P.J. Colfox, 1 Mill Lane, Symondsburry DT6 6HQ
tel: 07918 188497
Councillor Ms A.M. Gear, 1 Stover Place, St Michaels Lane
DT6 3RE tel. 01308-421029
Councillor J.D. Hunt, 8 Meadow Court, Folly Mill Lane DT6
3UW tel. 01308-422719
Councillor D.G. Rickard, 'Rydens', Westtown, Bothenhampton
DT6 4BQ tel. 01308-420908
Councillor D.R. Tett, Beech House 1 De Legh Grove, West Allington
DT6 5QY tel. 01308-425070
Councillor K.G. Wallace, The George, 43 Main Street,
Bothenhampton DT6 4BJ tel. 01308-456454
Councillor C.D. Wild, 9g Station Road, West Bay DT6 4EW
tel. 01308-420808
Councillor Ms S.J. Williams, 88A, South Street DT6 3NW
tel: 01308-459433

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2008

CURRENT ASSETS

Payments in advance	7,235
Debtors	24,319
Treasury Deposit	637,500
Cash at bank	89,004
Cash in hand	<u>55</u>

TOTAL ASSETS 758,113

CURRENT LIABILITIES

Creditors 125,634NET ASSETS 632,479

REPRESENTED BY:

Capital reserve as at 1 April 2007	15,300
Net movement during the year	<u>-</u>
Capital reserve as at 31 March 2008	<u>15,300</u>

General reserve as at 1 April 2007	545,838
Transfer to Earmarked Reserve	(430,000)
Net surplus for the year	<u>71,341</u>
General reserve as at 31 March 2008	<u>187,179</u>

Earmarked reserve as at 1 April 2007	-
Transfer from General Reserve	<u>430,000</u>
Earmarked reserve as at 31 March 2008	<u>430,000</u>

TOTAL RESERVES 632,479INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2008

INCOME

Precept	356,025
Interest	37,045
Allotments	1,000
Civic	100
Cemetery	20,208
Frontages	490
Market	97,920
Amenity Areas/Playing Fields	2,684
Mountfield	48,141
Salt House	3,606
Town Hall	<u>9,114</u>
	<u>576,333</u>

EXPENDITURE

Administration	180,765
Office Expenses	10,223
Mountfield	32,381
Salt House	7,511
Town Hall	34,385
Cemetery	30,271
Civic	7,922
Market	35,718
Other Services	40,200
Section 137	13,750
Amenity Areas and Playing Fields	<u>111,866</u>
	<u>504,992</u>

NET SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR 71,341

The above statement represents fairly the financial position of Bridport Town Council as at 31 March 2008 and reflects its income and expenditure during the year.