



BRIDPORT AND WEST BAY BULLETIN

the official newsletter of Bridport Town Council

Quarterly
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Your town council—keeping in touch

This is the first edition of Bridport Town Council's newsletter, which will be published quarterly and is part of our drive to improve communications with residents and visitors. It will complement the council's annual report, the first of which is issued simultaneously with this newsletter.

Information about council meetings will continue to be displayed on noticeboards within the parish and publicised in the local press. More up-to-date information will continue to be provided through the council website, www.bridport-tc.gov.uk.

This first edition of the newsletter contains information on the main services provided by the town council, together with a report from our mayor, Geoffrey Ackerman, on his many activities in the past year.

We hope that you will find the newsletter useful and informative. If you have any comments on the newsletter, or suggestions for items or information you would like to see included in future editions, please contact us at the town council offices, Mountfield, Bridport.

Charles Wild,
*Leader, Bridport
Town Council*

Ron Gregory
Town Clerk

Report from the Town Mayor, Councillor Geoffrey Ackerman

Welcome to the town council's first newsletter which is being distributed with our Annual Report 2003-2004. This publication is part of the council's desire to improve communication with the people of Bridport and West Bay.

I've been born and bred, boy and man and have lived in Bridport all my life. I would like to think that producing this newsletter is a step forward but what do you think? Let me know.

This my third term of office and during this period I have again attended many different events in the towns of other Dorset Mayors.



A few of the local highlights during 2003-2004 were: -

- The celebrations of the 750th anniversary of the granting of the Royal Charter, especially the medieval weekend in St Mary's Church and Asker Meadows;
- The Melplash Show;

- The Military Bands Weekend in September involving musicians from many countries;
- The Remembrance Sunday Parade and Service.

I would also like to mention two key projects that will benefit Bridport or are already doing so:

- The West Bay Sea Defence Scheme is nearly complete. I remain hopeful, as Chairman of the West Bay Sea Angling Jetty Steering Group, that our efforts to provide an angling jetty will be successful.
- The CCTV system is proving to be of great benefit.

It was with great pride in May 2004 that I accepted the privilege of being asked to serve as your first citizen for a third consecutive term.

Geoffrey Ackerman
Town Mayor

What Bridport Town Council is doing for you

In this first edition of our newsletter, we describe some of the services and amenities provided by your town council.

Bridport Market

Market days are Wednesday and Saturday. The street market is an essential feature of the town's character and continues to be successful. For the year ending 31 March 2004, the gross market toll income increased from last year's levels of £80,000 to £92,000. Tolls were again reduced to regular stallholders during the winter months. Unfortunately, the standard licence fee payable to WDDC eats into this increase, as we are obliged to pay a proportion of the net income. A new leaflet has been produced to publicise the market.

Play areas

Following successful public consultation, new play equipment was provided at Court Orchard and St Mary's play areas. In both cases, this caters for younger children. At the request of older children at the Court Orchard play area, new goalposts have been provided and a football pitch marked out. Donations towards the cost were made by BYPAT and the Dorset Youth Service.

Seats

In the town, two of the large metal and wood seats have been completely refurbished. This has been supplemented by another refurbished seat from store to provide a much needed seat for the West Street bus stop. At the request of a member of the public, a seat has been installed in Back Rivers.

Street Lighting

The town council works in partnership with Dorset County Council, whereby the town council meets the capital costs of projects and the county council meets the ongoing revenue costs.

This year, additional lighting was provided for St Michael's Lane, Folly Mill Lane, Chards Mead and Asker Gardens.

Asker Meadows

In partnership with West Dorset District Council, the town council has been successful in being awarded a grant from Defra for improvements to Asker Meadows to the benefit of the community. This green area between Bridport and Bothenhampton continues to be a popular open space for walkers and dog owners.

Trees

The town council acts under an agreement with Dorset County Council for the maintenance of highway trees in the town. As well as the normal inspection and maintenance, eighteen new trees were planted on the highway to replace and enhance those lost in previous years. At Flaxhayes, an anonymous donation has enabled more trees to be provided on the most northerly of the fields at Flaxhayes and alongside the river.

Memorial trees have been generously donated for Riverside Gardens and the Cemetery. In all, an additional eighty or so new trees were planted in and around Bridport.

Outdoor Amenities

The town council's outside staff continue to maintain the cemetery, amenity areas, play areas, football pitches etc, in excellent condition. They do this with a cheerful good nature and minimum of fuss. The training needs of the groundstaff have been identified and as a result, courses in basic first aid, use of abrasive wheels and spraying have been attended in the last year. A quarterly staff meeting has been introduced.

Millennium Green/Mountfield

The premises and gardens at Mountfield continue to be well used. Several events have been held in the gardens, a May fair and music evenings. The Millennium Green is overseen by a Trust and an agreement entrusting this valuable amenity to their care was completed in January 2004.

The stone retaining wall at the rear of Mountfield became dangerous and a length of almost forty metres has been rebuilt at a cost of £16,000.

Cemetery

The Woodland Burial area was opened at Bridport Cemetery. This has provided an area for interment in natural surroundings. This has created much interest both locally and from outside the town.

As well as the normal routine maintenance works at the Cemetery, additional health and safety works have been carried out. Headstones have been made safe using the recently purchased gantry crane. This has enabled large headstones to be dealt with and made safe, where necessary, using stainless steel dowels.

The bells on the chapels have been removed and put in storage because the mountings had become very badly corroded.