



# BRIDPORT AND WEST BAY BULLETIN

the official newsletter of Bridport Town Council

Quarterly

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## *Toilets to stay open—at a price*

The town hall toilets will remain open, in response to public demand, despite the decision last year by West Dorset District Council to stop maintaining them. The cost of running the toilets will now be borne by the town council – and that means by the council tax payers of Bridport.

Residents of the surrounding parishes, Symondsburys, Allington, Bradpole, Bothenhampton, Burton Bradstock and others further afield, will no longer be making a contribution through their district council rate, despite continuing to spend a penny in the town centre. On average the ratepayers of these parishes pay about £90 less per annum (Band D), and the additional burden of keeping the toilets open has helped to increase the gap this year.

This is a direct consequence of what happens when the upper tiers of local authority decide to cut essential services to keep their share of the council tax down. If the service is to be maintained, the cost comes back onto the town council, which

unlike the district and county councils, receives no financial support from central government.

The result is that in the next financial year the town council will be unable to allocate money to a number of other hoped-for projects, such as providing an additional allotments site (there is now a lengthy waiting list for plots), security lighting at the Millennium Green, and a much-needed replacement mower for the cemetery.

We will be continuing to look at all our costs carefully in the coming year, in attempting to provide quality services and facilities for residents and visitors, while keeping our share of the council tax precept as low as possible.

**Charles Wild**  
**Leader**  
**Bridport Town Council**

**Martin Ray**  
**Chairman**  
**Finance and General**  
**Purpose Committee**

## Looking after our Town Hall

The Town Hall is a Georgian Grade 1 Listed building, and the most famous landmark in our town. An Act of Parliament in 1785 allowed the bailiffs and burgesses to borrow £1500 to build a new market house. Nine trustees met every three weeks and had to have at least £30 before they could become responsible trustees. All decisions were posted on the church door before service on Sunday, (in the same way as we give notice of meetings and publish minutes today), and were also cried by the town crier.

The construction work was carried out by eight local craftsmen, and we know from records in the museum exactly what each of them was paid. The brick was made locally, and the stone came from Portland. They completed the work in 1787, taking just over a year. The original money proved to be not enough, so Samuel Sylvester Tompkins was

given the task of collecting 6d in the pound from every householder: this continued for 50 years under a variety of collectors. Some things never change!

The Town Hall is our responsibility and we need to hand it on to future generations in good order, which is why we are applying for a Heritage Lottery grant. It takes a little more than £1500 nowadays, but if we get it the building can be used by far more people than it is at present, and we are very short of space for activities in the town.

The Fra Newbery paintings which he gave to the town are a wonderful collection not always appreciated by the local population. He is very highly thought of in Glasgow where he helped to found the Glasgow School of Art together with Charles Rennie Mackintosh.

**Sandra Brown**  
**Deputy Town Mayor**

# Applying to the town council for a grant

Bridport Town Council offers one-off grants to Bridport based organisations to help them get started or to fund particular projects which will improve the lives of Bridport residents. (Private organisations and individuals will not normally be eligible.)

To enable the grants process to run more smoothly Bridport Town Council is changing the timetable for grants applications in 2005/6. All grant applications now need to be submitted by mid June.

All grant applications will be reviewed by the Best Value and Scrutiny Sub-committee at the end of July for consideration by the Finance and General

Purposes committee in September, and final agreement is given by the full Town Council in September. To be fair to all applicants, grant applications will no longer be considered at other times of the year.

You can obtain a copy of the grant application form (and more details about the selection criteria) from the town council offices at Mountfield.

**Gill Fifield, Chair**

**Best Value and Scrutiny Sub-committee**

## Report from the Town Mayor, Councillor Geoffrey Ackerman

*During the last three months I continued to be very busy in my role as Town Mayor of Bridport and attended the following engagements:*

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*Chamber of Trade and Commerce's Late Night Shopping; the opening of Harbour Bonfield Garage Ltd; Chrstmas reception in Verwood; Portland Civic Service; Choral Society Concert; Mountjoy Christmas Concert; W.I. Carol Service; St James's Park Nursing Home Carol Service; Snowdrop Service at St Mary's Church; Stonework Appeal Service at St Mary's Church; St Mary's Primary School Fete; Visit to Sidney Gale; Christmas Day visit to Bridport Hospital; Pantomime at the Lyric Theatre; Senior Prize Giving at The Sir John Colfox School; Rotary Club Senior Citizens' Party; Burma Star Association Lunch; St Vaast Twinning Association Party; WRVS Lunch; Friends of Bridport Museum Entertainment evening; Probus Club Ladies Luncheon; Farmhouse Breakfast Week at Washingpool Farm; Melpash Agricultural Society Dinner Dance; Bridport and District Motorcycle Club Event; Bridport Charities meeting; and finally, the official opening of the Jurassic Pier at West Bay by HRH Prince Andrew.*

**Geoffrey Ackerman**  
**Town Mayor**

## West Bay—next steps

With the new piers now complete and officially open, the next step at West Bay will be for planning applications to be submitted for the new Harbourmaster's office and Coastguard building at the Mound, and for new toilets at the West Bay Road car park. These planning applications are likely to be submitted in the next couple of months, and will be on display locally for public viewing and comment.

Meanwhile the town council is continuing discussions with the district council about the possible submission of a bid for funding for multi-watersport facilities at West Bay, including the Sea Angling jetty.

## Play Areas in the town

The town council provides and maintains play areas at the following locations:

- **St Mary's Small Play Area**, including two football pitches with goal posts;
- **St Mary's Trim Trail** near the play area;
- **Peter Foote Memorial Play Area**, Broadmead Avenue;
- **Flaxhayes Play Area**;
- **Skilling Oval Play Area**;
- **Plottingham Play Area**, with **skatepark** nearby;
- **Court Orchard Play Area**, with football pitch;
- **Meadowlands Play Area**.

We plan to carry a more detailed report on our play areas in a future edition of this newsletter.