



BRIDPORT AND WEST BAY

BULLETIN (d r a f t)

the official newsletter of Bridport Town Council

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New Town Council

Elections for the Town Council were held earlier this year. The details of the new councillors are set out in the Town Council's Annual Report, circulated with this Bulletin.

New Town Clerk

The Town Council has a new Town Clerk, Bob Gillis, who succeeds Ron Gregory following his retirement in August. Bob was previously Democratic Services Manager at South Somerset District Council.

A Quality Council

The Quality Parish Scheme is backed by the Government to demonstrate that local councils are well run and able to take advantages of new freedoms to act on behalf of their communities. To be designated a Quality Council a town or parish council must meet the following criteria:

1. Electoral Mandate – councillors elected not co-opted.
2. Qualified Clerk.
3. A Specified number of Council Meetings.
4. Good communication.
5. Issue Annual Reports.
6. Proper financial arrangements.
7. Councillors adopt code of conduct and sign up to it.

The Town Council currently meets all the criteria with the exception of the qualification of the Clerk. Clerks of quality councils need to have a Certificate in Local Council Administration. It is hoped that this qualification will be obtained over the next year. The Council will then be in a position to make its application to be designated a quality council.

Salt House, West Bay



The last Bulletin featured an article on the Salt House, West Bay, which is now managed by the Town Council and has been re-opened for community use. It is pleasing that over the past year, a number of bookings have been taken for the venue including from many local community groups. Those people who have booked the venue have been pleased with the facility. For more information about bookings please contact the Town Council on 01308 456722 or email enquiries@bridport-tc.gov.uk.

Providing Community Spaces

The Town Council is actively working with the County and District Councils and community groups to identify publicly owned open space and empty property that can be brought into community use, to be enjoyed by the people of the town.

Currently the Town Council is working with local groups to draw up management plans for open space at the New Zealand and St Mary's Community Orchard sites.

The Town Council is also looking at sites that could be used to provide more allotments for people in the town.

West Bay Regeneration

The District Council's regeneration scheme for West Bay is continuing and the Town Council is part of a group looking at the feasibility of providing a Sea Angling Jetty.

The Town Council is supporting efforts to bring the Methodist Chapel in West Bay into community use, which could include much needed public information and interpretation facilities.

Town Hall Improvements

The Town Council is looking to submit a bid for Heritage Lottery Funding for renovation works on the Town Hall. The plans for the Town Hall include installation of a lift and opening up the southern ground floor of the building for alternative community uses, and make it more accessible. To enable the works to take place a decision needs to be taken on relocating the town centre public toilet facilities and this is being discussed with the District Council.

The timescale for the Lottery bid is that the first stage bid will be submitted by May 2008 and if successful a second stage bid will be submitted, and the funding decision known, by the end of 2009.

The Town Hall is an important building for the Town and there will be consultation over the winter on what local people would like to see. More information on this project will be included in future bulletins.

It is hoped that many people will get the opportunity to view the Town Hall as part of the Fra Newbery celebrations in April 2008.

Fra Newbery - The Newbery Trail



Planning continues for the countywide 2008 April Newbery Trail, celebrating the work of Fra Newbery. Newbery spent his childhood and youth in Bridport, later becoming Director of the Glasgow School of Art.

Newbery painted five historical paintings and a mural for the town that are on permanent display in the Town Hall. The Town Hall will be the Bridport focus for the month long celebrations. Paintings will also be exhibited at the Arts Centre and the Museum. Talks will take place at the Town Hall and many other events and activities are planned in Bridport and across the county.

Supporting the Market

The Town Council is working to promote the market and encourage people into the town, particularly on Wednesdays. There has been increased advertising in the trade press and the Town Council is looking at other ways to support the market. In a recent survey of stall holders, it was generally felt that the market was well managed but that it needed more support on Wednesdays.

Bridport is lucky to have such a thriving market, which as well as bringing people into the town also brings income to the Town Council through the stall holder fees.

Giving Grants

The Town Council gives grants to a large number of local community organisations that work for the benefit of the town. These bulletins will include information on the work of some of the larger bodies that the Council supports starting with the Citizens' Advice Bureau.

Citizens' Advice Bureau

A grant of £1,500 was given by the Town Council to the CAB this year. The Bureau offers advice to the public at no cost. It is partly funded by the District and Town Councils and the service is provided by trained volunteer advisors. The Bureau's work is overseen by a Board of Trustees, who themselves are volunteers. Across the country as a whole the service has advised over 1 million people on debt alone. These are people who have fallen into debt, often through no fault of their own and it is reassuring that the Citizen's Advice Bureau is able to help. The CAB also advises on benefit entitlement, employment issues, homelessness, consumer rights, family break ups and many other matters.

Councillor David Tett represents the District Council, and Councillor Roger Stoodley represents the Town Council, on the CAB.

Sustainable Bridport

The Town Council's Environment and Social Wellbeing Committee is looking at what the Town Council can do to implement the Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Act. It is already looking at measures that can be taken to make its own buildings more environmentally friendly and is looking to take advantage of new powers within the Act to promote energy saving measures. This will be a key area for the Town Council over the coming year and if you have any suggestions as to what you would like to see happen in the town, please contact Bob Gillis, Town Clerk on the number/email below.

Report from the Mayor

It is a great honour to be elected to serve as Mayor for a fifth time. I am always amazed at the variety of duties the Mayor undertakes during the year. Highlights so far have been the Beer and Food Festival at Asker Meadows, the Melplash Show and the Remembrance Day Parade and Service. I am thoroughly enjoying my current term of office.

Councillor Geoffrey Ackerman

Christmas Festival

The Bridport Christmas Festival takes place on 12 December starting at 6pm. Santa will be arriving in Bucky Doo Square and there will be a Farmers Market, market stalls and events throughout the evening.

Save BBC Radio Dorset

The Town Council is supporting the campaign to save the proposed FM station BBC Radio Dorset. It has been announced that the proposed radio station has been axed. There is a county wide campaign and an online petition where people can register their support for the station. The web site for the petition is: www.bbcradiodorset.co.uk.

Forthcoming Council meetings

Town Council

Tuesdays, 5 Feb; 22 April, 6 May (Annual Town Meeting)

7pm at Bridport Town Hall.

Plans Committee

Mondays, 7 Jan, 4 Feb, 3 Mar, 7 April
7 pm at Mountfield.

Finance and General Purposes Committee

Wednesdays, 23 Jan, 2 April
7 pm at Mountfield.

Environment and Social Wellbeing Committee

9 April 7pm at Mountfield.

Members of the public are welcome to attend all meetings, and may ask to speak in the Public Forum at each meeting.