



BRIDPORT TOWN COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

2003-2004



This is Bridport Town Council's first Annual Report, which provides an opportunity to take stock of the past twelve months. This first Annual Report is being issued with the first of our quarterly newsletters, but future reports will be published in the early summer at the start of each new municipal year. The town council is only one of many organisations working within the town and I would like to thank those who have helped and supported our efforts in any way. We are trying to demonstrate that partnership working can and does deliver.

Since May 2003, fifty per cent of the town council have been new members, and this has provided a welcome injection of fresh thinking and ideas. The new councillors have been conspicuous for their energy and enthusiasm, and have already made a significant contribution to the work of the council and the life of the town, as have the more experienced members who were re-elected in 2003. Members of all political groups have been working together for the benefit of our community.

Now that the new council has settled in, we are seeing significant progress. We are reforming the committee structure of the council to deliver better results, and we are developing our own town plan. There is much work still to be done in modernising the town council and equipping it to serve the community, deliver Best Value and meet 21st century challenges and opportunities.

Through the Bridport Local Area Partnership, we are now actively seeking to build on the achievements of the Bridport Community Initiative and to develop and consolidate our relationships with the many local organisations and the surrounding parishes which make up the wider Bridport community. We are overhauling the town website, and we are producing a council newsletter to improve our communications and keep electors informed about council activities.

Geoffrey Ackerman has continued (for a third consecutive year) to serve the town as mayor with distinction and good humour, ably assisted by his deputies, last year Henry Samuel and this year Sandra Brown.

Although 2003-4 was generally a happy year for the town council, we were particularly saddened by the loss of one of the town's longest standing and most distinguished councillors, Humphrey Dibdin, and by the death of Derek Boyt, who had been working for us on the Sea Angling Jetty project.

In the coming year we will continue to support efforts to obtain funding for the jetty and other exciting facilities at West Bay, and to ensure that existing community services are maintained and improved.

Charles Wild
Leader, Bridport Town Council, November 2004

Bridport and West Bay

Bridport is an historic market town dating from Saxon times, surrounded by beautiful hills and rolling West Dorset countryside. The town was granted its Royal Charter in 1253, as it was the country's most important ropemaking centre. The rope and netmaking industries flourished and expanded to trade all over the world. It is upon these two industries that the town's fame and fortune was built. Today Bridport continues to provide netting worldwide for sporting and military needs.

The main streets are among the widest in the west of England, with over 1,000 listed buildings of historical or architectural merit, including a unique thatched brewery and a 13th century Chantry. Many of these houses were built for successful businessmen associated with the ropemaking industry.

The parish of Bridport includes the picturesque harbour of West Bay, with its shipbuilding past and its present-day life as a fishing village and popular holiday destination. Bridport acts as a market town and focus for about fourteen surrounding parishes.

The population of the parish is 7,600, that of the wider Bridport 15,000. There are many retired people living in the town and surrounding villages, often drawn here for the quality of life which enables them to enjoy participation in the wide variety of clubs and organisations within the community. The town has a thriving Arts Centre and Leisure Centre, a large number of churches and three supermarkets.

Many young people encounter housing problems. With the shortage of available affordable housing and with a low average wage from local employment, it is often difficult to get on the housing ladder. This is one of the many issues that the town is addressing through local community initiatives and through participation in the recently established Bridport Local Area Partnership.

Beacon Town

In 2003 Bridport won Beacon Status from the Countryside Agency for its support for local food production. Farmers' Markets are held at Bridport Arts Centre on the second Saturday of each month. The Centre for Local Food offers cookery workshops, support for local schools, community gardening and cookery sessions. 2004 has been designated "Bridport's Year of Local Food".

Gateway town to the Jurassic Coast

Bridport, with its harbour West Bay, is one of the Gateway towns to the Dorset and East Devon coast, which in 2002 won status from UNESCO as England's first natural World Heritage Site. The new harbour currently being constructed at West Bay will provide improved access to the coast and spectacular views of some of the most outstanding scenery along this magnificent coast, with the limestone cliffs and the Chesil Beach stretching away to Portland Bill. Bridport is taking a prominent role in helping develop interpretation themes and opportunities relating to the coast with the World Heritage Site Management Team.

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 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).

Officers

Town Clerk: Mr Ron Gregory

Town Surveyor: Mr Bernard Paull

Office Manager: Mr Paul Fuszard

Community Partnership Development Officer:
Miss Susan Anders

Administrative Officer: Mrs Linda Bullock

Office Staff: Mrs Jill Cox, Mr Steven Yarde

There are five other staff, who are: -

Carl Stoodley (Cemetery Superintendent)

Bob Hunt (Caretaker and gardener)

Andrew Franklin (Senior Groundsman)

Robert Goodland (Groundsman)

Ray McLaren (Gardener & Market Supervisor)

The Town Mayor

The town mayor is elected annually by fellow councillors. The town mayor for the year 2004-5, as for the past two years, is Councillor Geoffrey Ackerman, and his deputy is Councillor Sandra Brown.

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 2003.

North Ward:

Councillor Miss S.A. Brown
67 North Allington, Bridport, Dorset, DT6 5DZ; tel. 01308-423078
Councillor A.L.G. Harrison
17 Lake Lane, Bothenhampton, Dorset DT6 4JY; tel. 01308-459863
Councillor Ms F.K. McKenzie
204 Orchard Avenue, Bridport, Dorset DT6 5RL; tel. X/D
Councillor R.H. Nicholls
159 Victoria Grove, Bridport, Dorset DT6 3AG; tel. 01308-422679
Councillor C.M. Ray
9 St Andrews Road, Bridport, Dorset DT6 3BG; tel. 01308-459095
Councillor Mrs M.J. Ray
9 St Andrews Road, Bridport, Dorset DT6 3BG; tel. 01308-459095
Councillor R.J. Stoodley
Rogers Cottage, 88 St Andrews Road, Bridport, Dorset DT6 3BL;
tel. 01308-456797
Councillor A.F.H. Tiltman
Flat 1, Borough Gardens, Gundry Lane, Bridport, Dorset DT6 3RS;
tel. 01308-424954
Councillor K.G. Wallace
7 Asker Gardens, Bridport, Dorset DT6 3QA; tel. 01308-456454

South Ward:

Councillor G.J. Ackerman
31 Crock Lane, Bridport, Dorset DT6 4DF; tel. 01308-458098
Councillor Mrs S.A. Bagnall
46 Vernons Court, Bridport, Dorset DT6 3QF; tel. 01308-459232
Councillor Ms C.L. Clare
86 West Bay Road, Bridport, Dorset DT6 4AX; tel. 01308-425539
Councillor A.J. Fifield
4 Meadowlands, Bridport, Dorset DT6 4SU; tel. 01308-456081
Councillor Mrs G.L. Fifield
4 Meadowlands, Bridport, Dorset DT6 4SU; tel. 01308-456081
Councillor Mrs C.A. Murless
68 St Michael's Lane, Bridport, Dorset DT6 3RB; tel. 01308-424824
Councillor H.B. Samuel
9 Norfolk Court, East Street, Bridport, Dorset DT6 3LL; tel. X/D
Councillor D.R. Tett
Carlisle House, Bowhayes, Bridport, Dorset DT6 4EB; tel. 01308-425070
Councillor C.D. Wild
9g Station Road, West Bay, Bridport, Dorset DT6 4EW; tel. 01308-420808

The council and its committees

The full Council oversees all the activities of the town council. Two main Committees cover the work of the council, namely Plans and Finance & General Purposes, and they are supported by a number of sub-committees.

The Council meets six times a year at 7.00 p.m. normally on a Tuesday. The Plans Committee meets on a three/four week cycle, normally on a Monday. The Finance & General Purposes Committee meets on a Wednesday five times a year. The sub-committees meet once a quarter.

Agendas are normally issued seven clear days before the meetings and are posted on public notice boards throughout the town and also on the council's website (see page 2).

The press and public are welcome to attend all 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 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 of the main Committee meetings 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, on the notice boards, at the town council office and on the town council website. They are also circulated to the various local media organisations.

Planning

The town council is a consultee for planning applications within the parish boundaries. Over the past year it considered 221 applications and passed comments on them to West Dorset District Council.

Partnership Working

The town council is proud of the number of successful partnerships it has established with local authorities, local organisations and government agencies. The town council has lent firm support to the Bridport Community Initiative over a number of years, while an important partnership with West Dorset District Council commenced in November 2003 to develop Community Planning for the Bridport area. This initiative offers a wonderful opportunity to enable the community both in Bridport and the surrounding parishes to engage in the process.

Meanwhile the town council maintains its long-standing partnership with Dorset County Council and West Dorset District Council on practical matters including provision of new and improved street lighting, the highway tree partnership, and the highway maintenance partnership, for example, the cutting of grass and hedges on Priory Lane and South Mill Lane.

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2004

LONG TERM ASSETS		
Government Stock		835
CURRENT ASSETS		
Payments in advance	5,220	
Debtors	38,271	
Treasury Deposit	410,000	
Cash at bank	45,306	
Cash in hand	<u>96</u>	<u>498,893</u>
TOTAL ASSETS		499,728
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Creditors		<u>107,203</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>392,525</u>
REPRESENTED BY:		
Capital reserve 1 April 2003	15,300	
Net movement during the year	<u>-</u>	
Capital reserve 31 March 2004		15,300
General reserve 1 April 2003	322,606	
Net surplus for the year	<u>54,619</u>	
General reserve 31 March 2004		<u>377,225</u>
TOTAL RESERVES		<u>392,525</u>

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2004

INCOME	
Precept	260,003
Interest	13,198
Allotments	811
Cemetery	15,281
Civic	210
Market	92,625
Frontages	728
Amenity Areas and Playing Fields	1,034
Mountfield	41,352
Millennium Green	31,095
Town Hall	<u>8,296</u>
EXPENDITURE	
Administration	135,754
Office Expenses	8,716
Mountfield	18,224
Town Hall	10,591
Millennium Green	35,500
Cemetery	27,005
Civic	9,087
Market	25,957
Other services	45,634
Section 137	13,300
Amenity Areas and Playing Fields	<u>80,246</u>
NET SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR	<u>54,619</u>

The above statement represents fairly the financial position of Bridport Town Council as at 31 March 2004 and reflects its income and expenditure during the year.