

A to Z to Bridport Town Council Services 2024

Allotments: The Town Council has over 200 allotment plots and at the current time there are about 100 people in the parish on the waiting list. The Town Council works closely with the Bridport and District Allotments Society on all aspects of the management of the allotments.

Asker Meadows: The open space and adjoining New Zealand site are overseen by a well-supported community group. In the last year the showground has been used by the Circus, Action Challenge, Folk Festival, Jurassic Fields Music Festival and the Food Festival.

Beach Wheelchair Scheme: This scheme provides access to West Beach using dedicated beach matting, and three specialised wheelchairs that extend this access to other areas of the beach, and into the sea.

Borough Gardens: The Borough Gardens community group, supported by the Town Council, has met regularly on site, making continued improvements to the Gardens. The Gardens were also used for events during the year.

Bridport Communities Trust: The Council is the sole trustee to this trust, created in 2022 with the main purpose of protecting community assets that are at risk of being lost to the community. The Trust is the owner of Bridport WI Hall, and in 2024 is expected to take ownership of West Bay Discovery Centre. The Trust's operational activity is overseen by a management committee comprising both town councillors and stakeholder groups.

Bridport Football Club: The Town Council has the freehold ownership of this land and the Football Club has an existing lease. The Town Council manages the car park, with the proceeds split equally between the Football Club and Town Council. The multi-use games arena on the site is free to use during the day and continues to be very popular.

Bridport Local Area Partnership (BLAP): The Town Council continues to support BLAP and receives a £6,000 annual funding contribution from Dorset Council. In the past year, BLAP has continued to work on projects, looking at homelessness and health & wellbeing. It has also worked with parish and town councils, to look at the options to work together on delivering services, and on future town and parish council engagement with the new Dorset Council.

Car Parking: The Town Council owns the public car parks at Plottingham and Bridport Football Club. We also provide a limited number of parking permits at The Grove in Rax Lane. We have installed 'solar car ports' at Plottingham, to generate electricity for the local grid and for electric vehicle charging.

Cemetery: The Town Council manages Bridport Cemetery, which is such an important and highly regarded asset for the town.

Climate Emergency: The Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and published an action plan in the same year. Actions from the plan are being delivered, including the Energy Champions initiative that aims to address fuel poverty and reduce the carbon footprint of local residents. In 2022 we also installed solar car ports, and replacement windows at Mountfield. A revised action plan was agreed in 2023.

Civic and Ceremonial: The Town Council elects and supports the Town Mayor, who carries out civic roles on behalf of the town. In the last year the Mayor attended 111 engagements, and raised funds for Bridport Community Kitchen and Bridport Youth & Community Centre, in addition to his formal role in leading civic events such as Remembrance Sunday, and chairing our Full Council meetings..

Communication: The Town Council issues an annual report on its work, which is widely available throughout the town, along with newsletters for events. An occasional Market Newsletter is also issued for market traders. The Town Council hosts its own web site and a community web site, and social media accounts for the Council and the TIC. The Town Council, through the TIC, is able to take online bookings for events on the community web site. A weekly Town Council bulletin is issued to town councillors. All of our formal council meetings are open to the public, and town councillors and the Town Clerk regularly attend meetings of other organisations and groups to provide updates on our work.

Community Governance: The Council regularly reviews the arrangements for local governance, and in 2022 its submission to expand the Town Council boundary, with the number of wards increasing from two to five, was approved. This change took effect on 1 April 2024

Community Orchard: The Town Council owns this site, and Bridport Community Orchard Group manages it for the town, including hosting a number of popular events during the year, such as Apple Day and Wassailing. The Orchard Group also manages the land at the top of Park Road known as Jubilee Green. The sites are managed in partnership with the Council.

Community Transport: The Town Council launched its first community bus service in August 2018. Service 7, the round-Bridport bus, also receives financial support from Allington and Bradpole Parish Councils, and a stakeholder working group provides professional and community input. The service is operated under contract on our behalf by Dorset Community Transport.

Consultation: The Council responds to formal and informal consultations on behalf of the local community, and is a statutory consultee on a various matters, including planning. We also carry out our own consultations when developing policies and strategies.

Democracy - Working with Young People: The Town Council continues to support the Bridport Youth and Community Centre, and engages local schools in the

Rights Respecting project, which is supported by the Town Council. Schools have been involved in other Town Council initiatives, such as Commonwealth Day and the planting of a WWI commemorative tree. We are also working with local youth stakeholder groups on the provision of an indoor skate park.

Emergency Planning & Resilience: The Council maintains an Emergency & Resilience Plan, setting out how the Bridport community will respond in the event of a major emergency, and how the community will build resilience against such events in future. The plan is developed with the help of stakeholder partner organisations and local volunteers. The plan is most regularly activated in response to flood and storm events, and provided a basis in 2020 for the Council's creation of a community support network providing coordinated help during the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions. As part of our work we maintain a team of volunteer Flood Wardens.

Environment and Social Wellbeing Committee: The purpose of this committee is to protect and enhance the town's natural and built environment, to provide a pleasant environment for residents and visitors, and to promote the adequate provision of housing, health & environmental services & related facilities, as well as exercising our influence to support reducing crime and disorder. Over the past five years the climate emergency has been a major focus for the committee.

Events: The Town Council is the lead organiser for the annual Community Charter Fair, Remembrance Sunday parade, and Christmas Cheer. We also provide support for all of Bridport's major events including the Food Festival, Beer Festival, Jurassic Fields Music Festival, Folk Festival, Carnival, Torchlight Procession, and the Hat Festival. We provide the town's box office, promoting and ticketing all of the major venues and events, as well as for a host of smaller events. We process road closure applications for community events. The Town Council provides flags, and bunting for the town centre in summer, erects Christmas lights and enables event organisers to have banners on town centre lamp posts.

We own and manage Bucky Doo Square and book it out for music and other activities throughout the year.

External Funding: During 2018/19, the Town Council secured external funding for the Neighbourhood Plan, the Bridport Collaboration initiative and Section 106 funding, to support a range of projects.

Finances: This Committee has a wide-ranging remit, covering of our work (including all policy, personnel and financial matters) except those issues within the remit of the Planning Committee and the Environment & Social Wellbeing Committee, or reserved for Full Council. The committee drafts the Council's budget and precept each year, and appoints councillor representatives to external organisations. It is the 'parent' committee for the Best Value and Scrutiny Sub-Committee, which oversee governance matters (constitution,

policy, etc.) and grant awards. The committee also has responsibility for the Market and Business Liaison Working Group.

Governance: The Town Council has a series of policies that regulate its proceedings, including a Code of Conduct for Councillors, Financial Regulations, Standing Orders etc. It also has a number of other key documents that it reviews each year, including its Asset Register, Risk Management Policy, Health and Safety Policy and Investment Strategy.

Grants: The Town Council provides annual funding, supported by a Service Level Agreement, to the Leisure Centre, Citizens' Advice Bureau, Museum, Arts Centre, LSi, West Bay Discovery Centre, 2020 Skate & Ride, and the Youth and Community Centre. We also provide two annual smaller grants schemes – the community grants scheme which opens in June and awards in September, and the West Bay Car Boot Sale scheme, which opens in November and awards in February/March. Total annual grant funding is currently in excess of £60,000.

Harbour Green: The Council owns the green, including the recently refurbished 'Welcome Hub' area. We lease part of the green each year for use for children's visitor attractions. The hub is a popular meeting point for motorcyclists.

Highway Verge Maintenance: The Town Council maintains the highway verges, as part of a Service Level Agreement with Dorset Council. In recent years we have adapted the cutting regime to promote biodiversity.

Lengthsman: The post of Lengthsman is funded by the Town Council and other local councils and organisations participating in the Lengthsman scheme. The work of the Lengthsman includes gulley clearing, repairing notice boards, removing fly posting, grass cutting, removal of weeds, repairing benches throughout the town and similar tasks.

Licensing: The Town Council licences 'sitting out' arrangements (tables and chairs on the pavement for street dining) and street charity collection licences. We also manage the use of A-boards on the highway.

Market: The Town Council manages the street market, West Bay Summer Markets, West Bay Car Boot Sale, and other one-off specialist market events. We are the market authority for Bridport, and anyone else wishing to hold a market in Bridport or nearby must seek our permission.

Market & Business Liaison Working Group: The Working Group includes representatives from the business sector, market traders and Bridport Local Area Partnership. The Working Group considers reports on the business, tourism, markets, town events, and town publicity and promotion.

Mountfield/Millennium Green: Our Mountfield offices are owned by the Town Council, whereas most of the surrounding gardens are owned by Bridport Millennium Green Trust. We work with the Trust on the delivery of its

management plan for the area, and provide general grounds maintenance. We also manage the use of the grounds for the Trust for local events.

Neighbourhood Plan: The Plan was adopted following a local referendum in 2020 and adds a local layer of planning policies to those contained in Dorset Council's Local Plan. The Town Council works with Symondsbury Parish Council on the monitoring and development of the Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan. The delivery of the Plan is being co-ordinated by a community-led Steering Group, overseen by a Joint Committee of the two councils.

Old Railway Line: The Council owns and maintains the land either side of this path running from Burton Road to West Bay, although (slightly oddly!) the path itself is owned by Dorset Council.

Parks and Open Spaces: Bridport Town Council is responsible for a range of open spaces, the main ones being Askers Meadows, St Mary's Playing Fields, Plottingham Field, Borough Gardens, Riverside Gardens, Community Orchard, and Millennium Green around Mountfield (maintained under agreement with the Trustees). The Council has an agreement with Bridport Community Orchard Group concerning the management of the Orchard at St Mary's and land at Park Road.

Partnership Working: The Town Council continues to work with a large number of partners, including local community groups, Bridport Local Area Partnership, the Police, Bridport & West Bay Business Chamber, other town and parish councils, Dorset Council, Magna Housing, the Western Area Transport Advisory Group, other local councils and many other organisations. The Town Council appoints representatives to over 30 local bodies.

Planning Committee: This committee considers all planning and transportation matters. The Town Council is a statutory consultee on all planning applications in Bridport and over the past year, 133 applications were reported to the committee and comments passed to Dorset Council. The committee decides whether to support requests to Dorset Council for highway changes, and responds to all planning and transport-related consultations.

Play Areas: The Town Council maintains several play areas, including the fully accessible West Bay Play Area. We maintain a rolling improvement programme and engage with local residents in developing the areas.

Riverside Gardens: The Town Council owns and maintains the Gardens, which are home to a tree nursery, and a display of sculptures gifted to the town by local artist Greta Berlin.

Salt House: This venue in West Bay is well-used as a hireable community venue. During the summer, the popular West Bay Wednesday evening markets are held on Fisherman's Green adjacent to the Salt House. The Council owns both the building and the green.

Staff: The Town Council has 27 members of staff, who support the delivery of our services and are listed overleaf. The Council supports apprenticeships and has recruited three in the past five years. The team is led by the Town Clerk and is broadly divided into administrative, tourism, and grounds teams. The Town Council is a Living Wage Council and carries out an annual review of staffing.

Tourist Information Centre: The Town Council runs Bridport TIC. It provides a huge range of information and services to visitors and residents, Box Office services to local organisations, and manages the Town Hall, Bucky Doo Square, Bridport and West Bay web site and the production of the Town Guide. The TIC is very popular and visitor numbers remain very high.

Town Council Five-Year Plan: In the early months of each council term, the Council sets its corporate five-year plan to provide a framework for its work over the course of the council term.

Town Hall: The Town Hall is owned by the Council, and hosts Full Council meetings. It is also a popular hireable community space, booked via the Tourist Information Centre.

West Bay WiFi: The Town Council provides a free outdoor WiFi service across West Bay.

WI Hall: The Council manages and maintains the hall, a popular hireable venue in North Street, on behalf of the Bridport Communities Trust.