



LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL



ANNUAL TOWN MEETING REPORT

2017/18

Part 1



Use of cartoon courtesy of Locality.org.uk (<http://mycommunityrights.org.uk/neighbourhood-planning/>)

Artist's details available via - <http://morethanminutes.co.uk/>

Lydney

Annual Town Meeting

at

The Town Hall, Lydney

On Monday 23rd April 2018 at 7.00pm

All Parishioners on the Electoral Role are invited to attend the
Annual Town Meeting

B Berryman

Cllr B Berryman

Mayor – Lydney Town Council

AGENDA

(Meeting to be called to Order by the Mayor)

Housekeeping

1. Apologies
2. Adoption of the previous Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 24th April 2017
3. The Mayor's Annual Report for 2017/18
4. Annual Police Report
5. To receive the following Annual Town Council Reports:
 - ❖ Planning & Highways Committee – Chairman's Report (Cllr A Preest)
 - ❖ Amenities Committee Report (Cllr C Harris)
 - ❖ Burial Committee Report (Cllr H Ives)
 - ❖ Finance & Scrutiny Committee - Chairman's Report (Cllr B Pearman)
 - ❖ CEOs Report
 - ❖ Head Grounds Man Report
6. To receive the Annual County Councillor's Report (CCllr A Preest)
7. To note the annual Charitable Trust Reports;
 - ❖ Bathurst Park and Recreation Trust
 - ❖ Lydney Recreation Ground Trust
8. To receive a selection Community Reports (Hard copies enclosed)
9. **Public Questions** (Questions submitted in advance of meeting by the general public – Submission deadline, 12 noon, Friday 13th April 2018)

Please note: Should any member of the electorate wish to raise a further question following the ATM they are respectfully requested to submit their question, in writing, to the Town Council for which they will then receive a formal response, tendered by the Mayor, as part of the Town Council's May Full Council Meeting to which they are more than welcome to attend.

10. Close



MISSION STATEMENT

'Lydney Town Council is dedicated to meeting the needs and aspirations of the whole community, to improving the quality of life for people living in Lydney and to enhance the attractiveness of the town as a place in which to live, work, visit or invest.'

Corporate Objectives

- *To provide a strong and independent voice for Lydney*
- *To provide high standard and cost effective services*
- *To preserve and enhance the traditions, character and identity of our Market Town*
- *To promote Lydney as a clean, safe, welcoming and socially inclusive town for all*
- *To support, maintain and promote the use of local facilities*
- *To encourage appropriate developmental growth*
- *To encourage citizenship and localism*
- *To work in partnership with others to achieve more for Lydney and its surrounding areas'*

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- ❖ **Amenities Committee Report - *Chairman's Report***
- ❖ **Burial Committee Report - *Chairman's Report***
- ❖ **Finance & Scrutiny Committee - *Chairman's Report***
 - *2018/19 Spending Plan*
- ❖ **Personnel Committee - *Chairman's Report***

CEO Report

Head Grounds Man Report

- ❖ **Leading Hand – Health & Safety Report**

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Custodial/Sole Trustee Reports;

- ❖ **Bathurst Park and Recreation Trust / Pavilion Café Report**
- ❖ **Lydney Recreation Ground Trust**

Community Reports:

- ❖ **Friends of Bathurst Pool**
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- ❖ **Friends of Lydney Hospital**
- ❖ **Lydney Coastal Community Team**
- ❖ **Royal British Legion**
- ❖ **Lydney War Memorial Trust**
- ❖ **Lydney Town Hall Trust Management Committee Report**
- ❖ **Lydney Community Centre**
- ❖ **The Victoria Centre**
- ❖ **Lydney Festival**
- ❖ **Friends of the Mesne**
- ❖ **Lydney Severnside Flower Club**
- ❖ **Lydney Twinning Association**
- ❖ **Lydney Dial-a-ride**

Community Sports Clubs:

- ❖ **Lydney Tennis Club**
- ❖ **Lydney RFC**
- ❖ **Parkrun**
- ❖ **Lydney Bowling Club**

Current List of Serving Councillors / Town & District Councillor Attendance Record & Lydney Town Council's Opening Hours

**Annual Town Meeting
Held at Lydney Town Hall, Lydney
Monday 24 April 2017 at 7.00 pm**

Present: Lydney Town Council
B Berryman (Mayor), D Biddle, R Christodoulides, J Greenwood, C Harris, H Ives,
W Leach, C Legg, B Pearman, A Preest, D Street and K White

Mrs J Smailes - Chief Executive Officer
Miss C Wheeler - Executive Officer
Mr R Lewis – Independent Internal Auditor, Wildin & Co

Gloucestershire Police
P C Allen (late arrival)

21 Members of the Public

Councillor Berryman welcomed all present to the meeting and explained that no practice fire evacuations were scheduled during the event. Attendees were then informed of the location of the fire exits.

All attendees were provided with a copy of the Annual Town Meeting Report 2016/2017 (copy available to download from the Town Council's website after the meeting). PC Allen was a late arrival to the meeting, however, the minutes reflect the order as shown on the agenda.

1. **APOLOGIES**

No apologies for absence were received.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the Annual Town Meeting dated 18 April 2016 were confirmed and approved as a true record and duly signed. **Proposed by Cllr Pearman, seconded by Cllr Harris.** Vote carried.

3. **MAYOR'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2016/17** – Cllr B Berryman

Cllr Berryman read out his report, as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2016/2017.

4. **ANNUAL POLICE REPORT**

PC Allen read out the Community Policing report, as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2016/2017.

5. **LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Amenities Committee – Cllr Harris

Cllr Harris read out the Committee's report, as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2016/2017.

Burial Committee – Cllr Ives

Cllr Ives read out the Committee's report, as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2016/2017.

Finance and Scrutiny Committee – Cllr Pearman

Cllr Pearman provided a précis of the Committee's report, as contained in the Council's Annual

Report for 2016/2017.

Cllr Pearman then gave a short presentation which highlighted that the External Auditor, Grant Thornton had signed off the Annual Return, but had highlighted the discrepancy between the Precept and how the same information had been shown by the Local Authority. It was noted that the Local Authority had taken the decision to withdraw the Local Council Tax Support Grant for 2017/2018, however Lydney Town Council had achieved a small reduction in its Band D figure which Cllr Pearman felt was a reflection of the progress which the Council had made.

Regarding the level of the Council's free/general reserves, Cllr Pearman explained that the Council was legally required to hold between 3 and 6 months expenditure in such reserves. Whilst the Council currently held an amount which fell towards the bottom end of the required sum, it was felt that that the Council was in a comfortable position to face challenges which may come its way.

Youth Forum Report – Cllr Ives

Cllr Ives read out the report, as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2016/2017.

7. **CHARITABLE TRUST REPORTS**

Bathurst Park and Recreation Trust – Trustee H Ives

Trustee Ives read out the Trust's report, as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2016/17.

Lydney Recreation Trust – Trustee Biddle

Trustee Biddle gave a précis of the Trust's report, as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2016/17. Particular mention was made of the issues which the Trust had faced with irresponsible dog owners who allowed their animals to foul on sports areas and did not pick up their animals waste. It was noted that as a result the Trust had taken the decision to enclose the sports areas and ban dogs from the area, which it was hoped would alleviate the problem.

8. **COMMUNITY REPORTS**

Friends of Lydney Hospital – Mr A Midgeley

Mr Midgeley advised that 2016/17 had proved to be another successful year for "The Friends". A new X-ray facility was planned to be up and running in May, however, it was noted that there was a national shortage of radiographers and Mr Midgeley stated that it was in the hands of the Health Trust to provide staff to operate the new facility. Thanks were expressed to the local community for their continued support of the Hospital.

Mr Midgeley spoke on the expectation that the healthcare services in the Forest would be rationalised and he stressed that this would not mean a reduction in the services provided to communities in the Forest. All present were advised that suitable sites for a single new hospital existed in Cinderford, Coleford. Whilst no decision had been made regarding future healthcare provision, Mr Midgeley felt that a local engagement exercise would be conducted in the next few months and it was stressed that the existing facilities would remain open and full staffed until any new facility was open and its operation had been proven.

Lydney Coastal Communities Team – Mrs W Jackson, Forest of Dean District Council

Mrs Jackson gave a précis of the Team's report, as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2016/2017. It was anticipated that the refurbished swing bridge would be reinstated prior to Easter. Furthermore, that whilst the Team's funding bid to provide improvements to the Harbour had not been successful on this occasion, it had received valuable feedback on its submission which would be considered prior to the submission of any future bids.

Lydney War Memorial Trust – Mr S Moore

Mr Moore advised that the Trust had completed extensive repairs to its properties, all of which were now occupied. Furthermore, in a bid to address an issue which the Trust had experienced with graffiti in the walkway, Mr Moore advised that the Trust was working with The Dean Academy to paint a mural in the area.

The Royal British Legion Lydney Branch – Mr M Houghton

Mr Houghton read out the Branch's report, as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2016/2017.

Lydney Town Hall Trust Management Committee – Mr M Channon

Mr Channon advised that the Trust had not received any grant funding from the Council in the last 12 months and had taken £61,877 in bookings. Reductions had been made in the Hall's running costs which had generated a small surplus. All present were informed that this was the first time the Trust was finally independent of the Council and was able to cover its own costs. Measures had been implemented to ensure that money was accounted for, however it would be necessary to write off some money which was owed to the Trust. Mr Channon stated that the Trust had commenced the new financial year on a sound footing and were advertising events at the Hall on-line. A card payment facility was being introduced and Mr Channon welcomed approaches from members of the public who were interested in assisting with the running of the Hall. Thanks were expressed to Mr Channon's fellow Trustees for their help and support.

9. **RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS RECEIVED**

Cllr Berryman advised that one question had been received from members of the Electorate and he read out the Council's response:

Q1 – The air pollution at the High Street area in Lydney is very poor. This was shown when Templeway West was being resurfaced, heavy lorries and commercial traffic were not able to enter the Mincost, Virgo compound which made breathing a lot easier. It was also pleasantly quiet! I would like to hear the Council's opinion on this and more importantly what they propose to do about it. I do feel that residents surrounding this area deserve a better quality of life with clean air and a lot less noise.

A – We continue to monitor nitrogen dioxide level in our Air Quality Management Area (at the Bream Road/High Street junction) as well as at points outside of the AQMA zone. We have seen a slight improvement since the introduction of the 20 mph speed limit on the High Street. This is likely to be due to the fact that traffic queuing to exit from the Bream Road can get out more easily, so the traffic flow at the T junction is eased and thus there are less emissions from vehicles waiting to exit, as waiting times are reduced.

Our highest results continue to be from the same locations as always, namely the tubes at 29 and 57 High Street and the three located together (for quality assurance purposes) by Inspirations Gallery on the corner of the junction. The national target is to achieve an annual average of 40 ugm-3 or below, at the fronts of houses where residents live or other sensitive locations. Our monitoring at the roadside locations in Lydney show levels that are often slightly raised above this target (sometimes they are slightly below, as in 2015 where no locations in Lydney exceeded the target annual average level).

The levels we measure are in common with many busy roadsides across the country. The slight variations from year to year are attributed to meteorological factors, which affect the dispersion of pollution in the atmosphere generally. The Government National Air Quality Strategy is still to be published. However, as vehicles are updated, the emissions associated with the newer models will

be less polluting. It is hoped that the replacement of older vehicles with new, will bring down the levels of nitrogen dioxide.

We haven't received any complaints of noise or air pollution from the Templeway West area, mentioned in the member of public's e-mail, but if she would like to contact us to discuss the nature of her problem we will investigate it for her. *(Response provided by Dr Alison Simmons, Senior Officer, Technical Pollution Services, Forest of Dean District Council)*

10. **CLOSE**
The meeting closed at 8.00 pm.

MAYOR'S REPORT

With my deputy Brian Pearman I have visited and been impressed by J D Norman and Mabey Bridge. Both companies are committed to Lydney and have started apprenticeship schemes.

After a period of the Council not having its full complement of Councillors I can now report that it is up to full strength.

Councillor Preest, having secured an extra car park at the railway station, is now working hard to secure the number of stopping trains.

The Council continues to support local groups through the donation and grants system.

Litter and dog fouling is still a problem and a drain on the Council resources.

Work has commenced on the Mesne upgrading it to the standard of Bathurst Park and new play equipment has already been installed.

An open space has been created in Tutnalls with bright coloured benches and a child friendly waste bin.

Planning has been approved by Forest of Dean District Council for toilets and a visitor's centre at Lydney Harbour and stakeholders meet regularly to push the programme forward. The first part of the regeneration was the swing bridge which is now in operation.

Flood defence meetings continue in attempt to stop the flooding in Lydney and this has been mainly successful, but Cookson Terrace still has grounds for concern.

The Council intends to continue with the beautiful floral displays throughout the Town. The Head Groundsman, James, has further plans for supporting wild life with grassed and wetland areas. He has been impressed with the increase in birds, hedgehogs, foxes and badgers on Trust land. I would like to thank James and his staff for the hard work that they put in to improve the look of Lydney.

The local sports club continue to support the youth of the Town and I thank them for that.

I would like to congratulate Tom Beveridge, Head of Dean Academy, his Governors and staff for their efforts in removing the school from special measures.

Clr Bob Berryman
Mayor



Charles Heaman
Recipient of Mayor's Civic Award 2017/2018

Firstly, I would like to thank you for your generous financial gift. Ballet uniform can be expensive and your assistance has helped me a long way to purchasing my first year's school uniform. Living in London is considerably different to living in the Forest of Dean.

A typical day, at English National Ballet School, begins with a 3 hour ballet class. We study various disciplines: virtuosity, Pas de Deux, repertoire and variation, character and also receive specialist training and coaching in twice weekly contemporary dance lessons.

Between dance classes I take part in body conditioning classes and strength training sessions. I also study choreography and 10% of my training is classroom based – studying a Level 6 Diploma in Professional Dance.



I live in a hostel in Pimlico and am fortunate enough to be able to room-share with a fellow ENBS student.

As I dance 6 days a week, I am unable to return home, to the Forest of Dean, as often as I would like.



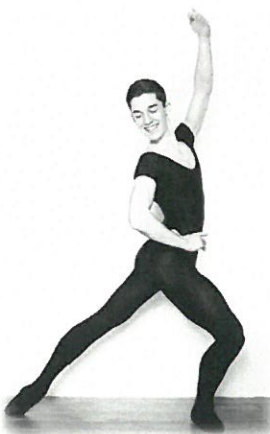
Twice a year, the school holds performances: In December we present a showcase in the school theatre (Grand Dèfilè photograph attached); at the conclusion of the summer term we take part in a full programme at a prestigious London theatre. Next year I will be given the opportunity to perform in ENB's apprentice touring company.

Every 4 months we have formal assessments by artistic staff and external assessors. The appraisal marks I received before Christmas were very promising.

I apologise that I am unable to join you this evening, in person, as I am at school in London but if there is an occasion in the future, I would be happy to give you a presentation/further update on my progress.

Thank you.

Charles Heaman



Police Report

Lydney Annual Police Report 2017/2018

Local Staff

Forest Neighbourhood Inspector – Insp 2536 Andrew Hodgetts
Forest South Sergeant (Coleford/Lydney/Sedbury) – PS 2541 Andrew
Doyle

Lydney beat manager – PC 2142 Hopkins
PCSO 49252 Tom Oliver

Crimes.

The number of crimes that has taken place across Lydney from 1st March 2017 to the 1st March 2018 have increased from **602** (16/17) to **658** same period (17/18). This is an increase of 56 crimes.

Response Times

Each incident reported to the Police is given a grading depending on the severity of the incident. This ranges from suspects no longer at the scene, date when the offence happened and also risk to life factors.

Grade 1's require trained officers to respond with lights and sirens illuminated. In urban areas the response times at set at **10** minutes. Rural areas are set at **20** minutes.

In the period – 1st March 2017 – 01 March 2018 there have been:

	Grade								Total
	1		2		3		4		
	Incs	%	Incs	%	Incs	%	Incs	%	Incs
Lydney East	295	22	449	33	384	28	237	17	1365
Lydney North	12	12	29	28	35	34	26	25	102
Lydney West	76	16	172	35	140	29	100	20	488
Total	383	20	650	33	559	29	363	19	1955

Police Report

Lydney Policing Issues.

- Wheeled Respect – this is a speeding operation which is run in Lydney. This operation continues to be a great success and is used to both enforce speed and to educate offenders about speed.
- OP TOMTOM continues to run within Lydney, this was created and is still run by PC Hopkins and members of the Lydney Neighbourhood Team who patrol a designated area within and surrounding Bathurst Park, Lydney after complaints regarding Anti-Social Behaviour.
- Community Speed Watch is available for members of the community to be trained using the speed gun. Minimum of 6 people required and gun provided by Road Safety Partnership.
- Officers continue to give educational talks surrounding internet safety, road safety etc. to the local schools within Lydney.
- The Lydney Community Team are arranging the Lydney Community Funday on Wednesday 30th May 2018. Approximately 15 agencies from within the community will be in attendance. Arrangements are still being finalised and will be confirmed shortly.
- Ongoing targeted Patrols in Newerne Street Car Park with regards to ongoing Anti-Social driving in the area.
- Members of the public are now able to sign up to The Community Alert System. Your Community Alerts is Gloucestershire Constabulary's new, free messaging system that enables residents, businesses and community groups to participate in a two-way exchange of information about what is happening throughout the county. You can sign up via your local Neighbourhood Officer or via the below link:
<https://www.yourcommunityalerts.co.uk/>
- The Neighbourhood engagement vehicle has been booked for the Easter/ Summer Holiday Period and will be in Newerne Street Car Park, Lydney between 1000-1400 on the following dates:
 - 26/04/18, 17/05/18, 30/05/18 (Lydney Community Funday), 14/06/18, 26/07/18
 - MORE DATES TO BE FINALISED.....

**ANNUAL COUNCIL
REPORTS**

Planning & Highways Committee Report 2017 - 18

Lydney Town Council is quite rightly a Statutory Consultee in the local planning process, and I believe that we analytically examine and subsequently comment on particularly large-scale applications that are to be determined within our boundaries.

Having a 'made' Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) means that the policies contained in the Plan must be taken into consideration when the Local Planning Authority - FoDDC are determining Planning Applications. Lydney's NDP has enabled the Town Council to negotiate directly with developers, influencing certain details within their given proposals; MMC (Oakdale Phase II) were persuaded to redesign the site drainage system, reducing the risk of surface water flooding to properties in the vicinity of lower Lakeside Avenue. Robert Hitchins have also worked with Lydney Town Council Stakeholder Group throughout the year on potential drainage issues and consulting on pedestrian/cycle routes throughout their developments.

I am not one to normally pass the buck, but our biggest weakness, which is not a weakness of our making here in Lydney, is the continuing failings of the Local Planning Authority, Forest of Dean District Council and its reluctance to embrace Localism and thus "empower local communities". It compromises one of the key benefits of Lydney's NDP regarding the potential level of Developer Contributions accruing to the town via a Community Infrastructure Levy Payment Schedule. This coupled with the weakness of their own Local Plan (the Core Strategy) leaves not only Lydney, but the whole of the Forest of Dean open to doubt, confusion, and ultimately challenge in relation to Planning Appeals which has a detrimental impact on the districts 'public purse'.

As I write this (late March 2018), Forest of Dean District Council still cannot demonstrate a 5 year land-supply Allocation Plan, unlike the other five District/Boroughs in Gloucestershire, all of whom intend having a Community Infrastructure Levy Schedule in place by the end of 2018 yet the Forest have not even started the lengthy process; instead of consulting with Parish and Town Councils on the New Homes Bonus Scheme and ensuring communities benefit they are simply using such funds to prop up their own general budget/reserves.

I would like to thank my fellow Planning and Highways Committee Members and Town Council staff for their hard work, support and commitment during 2017/18, in what can at times be somewhat trying and frustrating circumstances.

Cllr Alan Preest
Chairman



Amenities Committee Report 2017 - 18

This has been my sixth year as Chair of the Amenities Committee.

As I explained in my first report back in 2013, the Committee was created to focus on the multitude of details that need to be dealt with to create a better place for us all, in which to live. In short, it exists to look after the provision of the practical elements.

The Amenities Committee continue to improve the facilities and appearance of the Town, aided greatly by the Town Council's Ground Staff.

The 2017 Spring/Summer floral displays once again looked wonderful; the introduction of the floral troughs and hanging baskets in 2016 added greatly to the array of colour throughout the Town and for this reason it was agreed, given the number of positive comments received, to continue with the planting contract, even extending the existing contract to include the re-planting of troughs thereby providing a visual enhancement to the High Street throughout the Winter months.

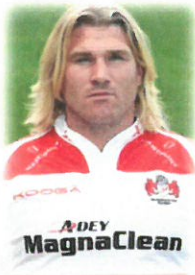
The wildflower areas at the Town Gateways, (*the Cross Hands Junction array of colour kindly sponsored in 2017/18 by The Lions*), the wildflower areas in St Mary's Churchyard and the Bug Hotel/Wildlife corridors adjacent to Lydney lake were also glorious, as too the newly created flowerbed at the entrance to Bathurst Pool. All areas will once again be reseeded/replanted in order to encourage bees and insects, providing wildlife corridors and honouring our commitment toward increased biodiversity.



Now that the intrusion of the wild boar onto Primrose Hill Mesne has been addressed effectively by the erection of boar proof fencing, the Committee's focus for 2018/19 will be on improving the Mesne; work to this affect has already commenced with the installation of a new play area for children under 5 years of age. In the Spring the ground will be reassessed and rolled if necessary; the junior football pitch will be remarked and the posts painted. It is hoped that by the Summer of 2018 the Mesne will have been restored to its former glory, a communal 'open space' that can be enjoyed by all.

South Road allotments continue to prove a popular past time. The allotments are well used and appreciated by allotment holders old and new, the inclusion two years ago of the raised allotment beds has enabled those with physical disabilities to also participate in this leisure pastime.

During 2017/18 the Committee purchased and installed several new dog waste bins in areas identified by the public and although the dog fouling issue unfortunately continues, Forest of Dean District Council are soon to implement Public Open Space Protection Orders enabling their Street Wardens to target and fine those irresponsible dog owners who fail to clean up after their animal – ***it really is time these individuals were named and shamed publicly!***



The 2017 Christmas Light Switch-on Event was a great success with Gloucester/Cherry & Whites Rugby Player - Richie Hibberd being a huge hit with rugby supporters and towns folk alike as could be evidenced by the many photos he was asked to autograph throughout the duration of the evening.

Another full year cycle complete.

Cllr Carol Harris
Chairman

Burial Committee 2017-2018

This has been my first full year as Chairman of the Burial Committee, which is responsible for management of Lydney Cemetery and St Mary's Closed Churchyard.

This year the Committee are pleased to introduce 'desktop/flat tablets' to accompany the interment of cremated remains. During discussion with a local Funeral Director the Committee heard how bereaved families often prefer to inter ashes in the ground rather than to a Sanctum Panorama. It was felt the use of such tablets would better accommodate this and could doubly-serve to 'line' our Cemetery's pathways. Our chosen models are black in colour, 18" x 12" in dimension and utilise Block Roman font (the colour of which – gold or silver - may be selected by the family) and include a flower container. They are very beautiful and we hope provide a fitting tribute to the deceased.



In line with assisting families as far as possible, the Committee also reviewed its policy of free interment for children who have passed away under five and those who are stillborn (a fee for obtaining an Exclusive Right of Burial would still apply). It is difficult to comprehend how upsetting the loss of a child can be, so I am pleased to say this policy has now been extended all children aged sixteen and under. It is hoped, should the worst occur, this gesture relieves a small fraction of strain on grieving parents.

As I mentioned last year, the need for additional burial space remains paramount. To this end I am pleased to say a parcel of land has been identified at the rear of our Cemetery which could potentially expand capacity. The prospective site (currently held by the Athelstan Trust/Dean Academy) could be accessed off the A48 and should permission for sale be granted by Sport England, the Council would undertake ground condition testing to ensure suitability for use. Planning consent would also be required. We are hopeful this potential addition may resolve a capacity issue that has troubled this committee for years.

At our previous Town Meeting I stressed the need for anyone named as a Registered Deed of Grant Holder to notify us of any amendments to contact details. This point remains just as relevant today as it did then, lest we have another case of damage to a grave with no one to inform/contact. Whilst every effort will be made to trace you should something happen to the resting place of your loved one, if your details are outdated our options are limited.

As with last year I would like to conclude by thanking my Committee members, Lydney Town Council office staff and Groundsman for their ongoing efforts to maintain and improve these community spaces. We carry responsibility for all routine maintenance at both sites and as always the team have excelled themselves.

Thank you.

Clr Harry Ives
Chairman

Finance & Scrutiny Chair Annual Report 2017/2018

As ever this has been an interesting and challenging year financially.

I commented last year on the loss of Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) Grant which we still have to live with. The withdrawal of LCTS Grant is a loss equating to approximately 8% of income, and as a Town Council we cannot fall back on windfall revenues such as New Homes Bonus or Business Rate Retention to balance the books as can a Principal Authority such as Forest of Dean District Council. I confidently predict that the Council will end the year yet again within budget. (*I write this report to meet publication deadlines; month 12/13 Payment schedule may be used to evidence the prediction*).

Looking forward, the Council's agreed budget of £574,590 results in a Precept demand to the Billing Authority for 2018/19 of £517,915.00.

The above results in an increase on Council Tax at Band D of 2.6% (£4.92 per annum).

Taking a view over a 3 year period shows an increase of 0.94% (£1.78 per annum).

Lydney Town Council's (LTC) Precept Demand to the Billing Authority is determined by taking the Council's total budget figure and deducting the percentage of known and probable income which is used to offset the total sum. The balancing figure, then known as the Council's Precept total, is forwarded to the Billing Authority (Forest of Dean District Council).

The Billing Authority is then responsible for calculating the Council Tax sum payable by each household; it determines this by taking the Precept demand submitted to it by each parish/town council and other precepting authorities e.g the Police and Fire/rescue service and dividing this sum by the relevant area "Taxbase". The Taxbase figure is based on the number of Band D equivalent dwellings in the billing area with the number of dwellings so adjusted to take account of any discounts, exemptions or premiums (there are 21 classes of exemptions). The resulting figure for each 'tax band' is then multiplied by its proportion relative to Band D.

Often, people try to equate the number of new dwellings being built locally directly to the Council Tax Bill issued, however it is worth pointing out that in the last three years the Taxbase can be evidenced as only increasing by 159.3 points.

Some eighteen months ago a letter to the Press by a resident suggested that 350 new houses in Lydney should result in Lydney Town Council being able to collect approx. £64,000 in extra Council Tax. Unfortunately Lydney Town Council are not the Billing Authority and are not responsible for calculating the Taxbase (property offset sum), this figure is calculated each October by FODDC with any New Homes Bonus payable retained by them at this time.

I hope the aforementioned has helped to increase understanding generally of how Local Council finance works in a three tier system, as exists in our part Gloucestershire.

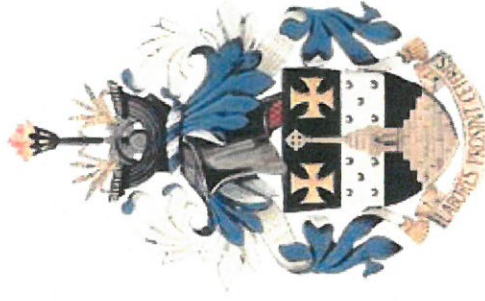
Thank you.

Cllr Brian Pearman
Chairman



Lydney Town Council's Spending Plan

2018/19



Introduction

The aim of the Spending Plan is to provide Lydney Town Council employees, Councillors and residents with a clear understanding of what the Town Council is trying to achieve and how it intends to deliver such. The Spending Plan focuses the Town Council on its core objectives over the next 12 months, ensuring that budgets set and activities organised meet the needs of an expanding Town.

The Plan will also assist the Council by;

- Helping it to operate in a more consistent and co-ordinated way
- Enabling it to track and monitor its progress against key priorities contained within its Strategic Action Plan
- Helping the local community to have a better understanding of what the Town Council are responsible for and provide an overview of the costs involved in service delivery.

The Town Council

There are three tiers of local government within Gloucestershire, each with different responsibilities. Lydney Town Council is the first and most 'local' tier, the grass root Council who has an important role to play in promoting the town, representing its interests and supporting the work of different groups in the community.

Forest of Dean District Council is the second tier, examples of responsibilities include: Car Parking, Planning, Waste Collection and Street Cleaning. Gloucestershire County Council are the third tier, examples of responsibilities include: Highways, Education, Health and Social Services, Public Rights of Way and Libraries.

Lydney has a well-established Town Council. Councillors are unpaid volunteers who commit their time to improving Lydney and maintaining it as an attractive and sustainable place in which to live, visit and conduct business. Non-contested elections were held in May 2015 and further elections will be held again in 2019.

Full Council meet on the second Monday of every month at 7pm (other than August). In addition there are four Committees; Planning and Highways, Amenities, Burial and Finance and Scrutiny, these Committees meet regularly throughout the year with all Council meetings promoted both through the website, Facebook and on community notice boards. There are also a number of Stakeholder Meetings which address such topics as the Communities Economic Development, Flood Defence and the Shared Cycle and Pedestrian Route Project.

Lydney Town Council are also Custodial Trustees/responsible for the maintenance and management of Bathurst Park and the Recreational Trust Grounds. The Council is also a Burial Authority caring for and maintaining Lydney Cemetery and the 'closed' churchyard at St Mary's church.

Lydney Town Council's Vision

Lydney Town Council (LTC) supports the vision enshrined in the Neighbourhood Development Plan of making Lydney 'the most vibrant and sustainable town in the Forest of Dean'. To this end we will seek to sustain a strong sense of community, to fight to ensure that infrastructure keeps pace with growth whilst preserving and celebrating our town's heritage.

Working with Gloucestershire County Council, Forest of Dean Council, local organisations and charities, LTC aspires to the following aims:

- A flourishing local economy where quality jobs are available locally
- A caring and efficient medical and welfare provision for all
- Educational and youth services that raise aspirations and encourage community engagement
- Meeting places and activities that keep our elders fit and active
- A high standard of sport and leisure provision that serves the whole community
- Space suitable for both performance and participation in the Arts
- Enhancement and protection of green spaces both within and at the edge of the town
- Infrastructure provision to meet the needs of a growing modern community

The Council Budget

The annual Revenue and Capital Budget sets out the Council's spending plans for the financial year and shows how these are to be funded including the contribution required from the council tax payers of the Parish via the Council Precept.



The Council must set a Budget every year and the Budget is set in advance of the following year using a process known as Policy, Budget, Precept (PBP). The Council's financial year runs from 1st April to 31st March.

The Budget is an estimate of the resources that the Council will require to meet the running costs of all of the services that it provides, to deliver on its strategic aims and targets, and to meet the needs and priorities of the local community.

The Revenue Budget funds the day to day running costs of all of the Council's services such as staff costs, gas and electricity, fuel and general supplies and services. The net cost after deducting any income receivable to each service from fees and charges and grants is met from the Town Council proportion of the Council Tax payable by all households in the Parish.

The Capital Programme Budget funds major one off investment in Council and community assets such as buildings, vehicles, parks and play areas and is usually funded from the Council's Balances and General or Earmarked Reserves and any external funding that may be available.

Once the Town Council has approved its budget, deducted a percentage of its 'known and probable' income and considered whether it wishes to use any 'offset' from its General Reserve Account, the balancing figure left, (the sum it then demands from the Billing Authority (Forest of Dean District Council)) is known as its Precept.

2018/19 Budget Setting

Lydney Town Council has recently set its 2018/19 Budget.

The Budget has been developed in line with the principles set out in the Council's medium-term financial plan of maintaining existing services whilst at the same time keeping the required increase in the council tax as low as possible.

The Council's finances are currently in a healthy position and in the short-term the outlook remains fairly positive with a balanced budget in place. The Policy, Budget, Precept (PBP) process adopted by LTC has placed it in a strong financial position.

Band D Calculation - 2018/19

Lydney	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	£ increase	% Increase	Offset
Precept	483,121.00	491,048.00	499,959.00	517,914.00	17,955.00	3.47%	Residue £17,500.00
Taxbase	2,570.46	2,651.96	2,705.34	2,729.76	24.42	0.89%	Predicted Income £19,176.00
Band D	187.95	185.16	184.80	189.73	4.92	2.60%	Offset from G/Rs £20,000.00
							£56,676.00

Comparison between Option 3 and Yr 2015/16

Lydney	2015/16	2018/19	£ increase	% Increase
Precept	483,121.00	517,914.00	34,793.00	6.72%
Taxbase	2,570.46	2,729.76	159.30	5.84%
Band D	187.95	189.73	1.78	0.94%

Financial Information

Budget Overview (2018/19)

Lydney Town Council is mainly funded by the residents of Lydney, through the 'Precept'. This is the local tax levied by the Town Council which is collected on its behalf by the Billing Authority - Forest of Dean District Council as part of the Council Tax bill.

LTC's budget for financial year (2018/19) is **£574,590**; the Precept derived therefrom being **£517,914** of this total sum. A copy of the Town Council's full budget including all income and expenditure is available, a copy may be viewed via our website both on our website, https://www.lydneytowncouncil.co.uk/?wpfb_dl=1695 a hard copy may be obtained by contacting the council offices.

The Town Council's **Top 5 budget spends in 2018/19 will be:**

- 1. Corporate Council Expenditure - £296,115** The budget includes; training provision and a contingency to cover any incremental increases required throughout the year. In addition there are on-costs for both National Insurance/HMRC and employer increased Local Government Pension contributions together with NJC Spine percentage increases, these having been agreed at national level.
- 2. Establishment Costs - £91,230** includes; Health & Safety, Vehicle and Audit Costs, Insurance and Civic Expenses.
 - **Public Works Loan Board (PWLb) £15,300 per annum, included in the aforementioned sum** is an annual repayment for the PWLB loan that was taken out in 1998 to rebuild the Pavilion in Bathurst Park following an arson attack. The loan was taken out for 26 years and will end in 2024.
- 3. Amenities Committee Budget - £83,470.** This Committee is responsible for Town Events, Allotments, Grass Cutting, Litter Collection, Grit/Dog Bins, Play Provision, Floral Displays, Street Furniture etc.
- 4. Finance Committee - £85,015.** The Committee awards Donations/Grants to local charitable organisations and groups that benefit those living in Lydney.
 - In order for the Council to be able to maintain both **Bathurst Park** and **Lydney's Recreation Ground** the Council must include a donation sum year on year for each. In 2018/19 **£56,500 will be donated to Bathurst Park & Recreation Trust and £20,515 to Lydney Recreational Grounds Trust**; without such a donation these facilities would be lost to the town.
- 5. Burial Committee Budget - £7,860.** This Committee is tasked with maintaining St Mary's 'closed' churchyard and Lydney Cemetery and providing burial space and cremated remains vaults/plaques.

(Note: Of the council's budget a total of £18,500 +, will be spent during 2018/19 on litter picking. This is an unnecessary expenditure sum which could be spent elsewhere improving community facilities or the like if those using the open spaces did so in a courteous and responsible manner).

The Council's Financial Reserves (as at end February 2018)

Lydney Town Council **Current Account** currently totals **£167,764.62** and is split as follows:

General Reserves (unallocated) - £158,380.22

- & - The Town Council is required to 'hold' a minimum of between 6 and 8 month's minimum total monthly spend as 'General Reserves'.

'Ear Marked' Reserves which total £132,303.74 which are made up as follows:

S106	29,191.50
Lydney War Memorial	2,000.00
Play Areas (General)	8562.64
Play Areas (Primrose Hill) (incl. s106)	23,529.43
Cemetery	13,842.14
Cemetery: St Mary's Churchyard/Wall	3,500.00
Cemetery: Memorial Testing	11,500.00
Cemetery: Additional Burial Space	14,000.00
Election Costs	10,000.00
Machinery	5501.22
Town Events	5000.00
(Contingency)	676.81
Environment Agency Payment	5000.00
	<u>458,448.58</u>

Assets

Lydney Town Council also have a number of assets (see the Town Council's Asset Sheet for full details - http://www.lydneytowncouncil.co.uk/?wpfb_dl=11).

Overarching Priorities

A 'Quality Gold' Council

Lydney Town Council is a professional, competent and caring Town Council. We strive to be open, transparent and accountable in all that we do and believe that we must ensure sound financial management of the Town's assets and resources.

The Town Council aims to:

- be well-informed about the needs and opinions of the town's residents and businesses by consulting them on major issues.
- improve services to the public by encouraging members and staff to develop their skills, by undertaking appropriate training.
- ensure Councillors are given the opportunity to keep abreast of new opportunities and policy.
- be a good and fair employer by providing fulfilling work opportunities and conditions for its staff.
- continuously promote public participation in all Town Council meetings and initiatives.
- maintain accreditation as a 'Quality Gold' status Council.
- deal with enquiries and fault reports from members of the public speedily and efficiently.
- be an effective custodian of the Council's property and documents.

The Town Council recognises the role of 'good communications' in building positive relationships with the public and with organisations that provide services in the town. The introduction of a new website completed in May 2015, the introduction of Twitter and Facebook and the distribution of our quarterly Newsletter are some steps already taken and invested in to improve lines of communication. Members also host Bi-monthly Councillor surgeries and remain available if you have a private matter you would prefer to book an appointment to discuss.

Personnel Committee - Chairman's Report 2018

As Chair of the Finance and Scrutiny Committee I also hold the position of Personnel Chair.

I am writing this brief report following the recent Personal Development Plan (PDP) discussions which were held with all members of staff.

Last year we introduced Personal Development Plans to replace the previous systems of annual appraisals. This was done in an attempt to foster a more productive/interactive approach to the process, allowing staff members to have much more input, both at the time of the annual review and indeed throughout the year. The results have been overwhelmingly positive, and I would like to congratulate all staff members on their positive attitude towards the new system.

The congratulations continue as to staff performance. It is easy to see the results around the Town of the efforts of our Ground Staff, be it the Cemetery, Bathurst Park, the Recreation Trust and like. Less visible is the contribution made by the Office Staff, supporting the Members, executing policies, liaising with members of the public and other organisations and generally keeping the "ship" on course.

Thank you all for another great year, and we look forward to 2018/19 and more of the same.

Cllr Brian Pearman
Chairman



CEO's Report 2017 – 18

For my report this year I would like to focus on the ***National Improvement Strategy for Parish and Town Councils 2017- 2022***, this is an initiative supported by NALC, SLCC The Department for Communities & Local Government and The Local Government Association.

The vision for town and parish councils

The strategy has been put in place with the aim of supporting all local councils in order they may reach their full potential, ensuring each makes a positive contribution to their community whilst continuing to strive for delivery improvement. All local councils have the potential to deliver benefit through the activities they undertake, these ideas are highlighted below in blue and can be defined as;

Service Deliverer

Through an extensive range of discretionary powers local councils provide and maintain a variety of important and visible local services which can make a very real contribution to their communities, for example, providing local transport solutions, improving the visual appeal of the area, increasing community safety, contributing to arts, culture and leisure provision, managing parks and open spaces, etc.

There are a wide range of ways these services may be delivered. They may be directly delivered and managed by the council, be devolved from another tier of government, be delivered by another organisation commissioned by the council, or the council may be contracted to deliver the service by another partner.

Culture Creator

The spirit of a local community is often visible in the range of activities and opportunities for local people to come together and participate in cultural, community-focused and recreational activities. These activities can include fetes, street parties, sporting clubs, youth groups, seasonal events, community hubs, parks and play areas, so essential to the wellbeing and quality of life of local residents, these activities can be delivered by local councils through a number of means.

The council may give their time, expertise, resources, or coordinate local activities and events. Council may also provide local venues, facilities, build networks and support, or provide grants to local groups who deliver these activities.

Place Shaper

Through their role in the planning system, particularly since the introduction of

neighbourhood planning, local councils have had the ability to shape future physical development within their communities.

Councils can protect the heritage and history of their areas as well as shaping the future of their communities in a very tangible way.

Builder of Community Resilience

Councils can support communities to build their capacity and resilience by encouraging people to get more involved in local issues. Often this is achieved by working with individual residents, local groups and organisations, local businesses, and other parts of the public sector. It may be that such is in response to a challenge such as coordinating responses to flooding or campaigning on a local issue. The council is also well placed to see the potential for improvement in a local community and may coordinate a community activity, for example registering local assets of community value.

Whilst councils may undertake such a role directly they can indirectly facilitate community participation also by providing the conditions it needs to thrive through supporting other local activity or organisations, providing encouragement, information and advice as well as giving moral and financial support to local groups.

Democratic and accountable

Local councils share many characteristics with local community groups and charities but their nature as the 'first tier of government' makes them unique and distinct.

Through their democratic mandate, ability to raise a precept and the legislation that governs the transparency of their processes and finances, they hold a unique position and legitimacy within the community with many local councils also going above and beyond their legal obligations, demonstrating efficiency and transparency in their work and continuously seeking opportunities to improve and develop even further.

Councils: Raising the Standard

The **Local Council Award Scheme** exists to celebrate the successes of the very best local councils. This scheme offers councils the opportunity to show that they meet the standards set by the sector, assessed by their peers, and to put in place the conditions for continued improvement.

Councils can apply to be benchmarked at one of three levels.

- The **Foundation Award** demonstrates that a council meets requirements for operating lawfully and according to standard practice.

- The **Quality Award** demonstrates that a council achieves good practice in governance, community engagement and council improvement.
- The **Quality Gold Award** demonstrates that a council is at the forefront of best practice and achieves excellence in governance, community leadership and council development; this is the award currently held by Lydney Town Council.

Officers: Professional Development - Local councils benefit from officers who have the knowledge, skills and understanding essential for the wide range of activities involved in their role. It is vital that councils appoint officers that they can trust to deliver appropriate advice and to manage the implementation of strategic decisions.

The CEO/Chief Officer of a council serving a community of any size is a professional employee requiring management, organisational and communication skills and an understanding of the law, administrative procedures, the planning system, financial management and community engagement.

Guidance for councillors - Currently there are two booklets produced for councillors, The Good Councillors Guide and Being a Good Employer.

Promoting councillor training – Whilst councils per-say do not have the authority to impose mandatory councillor training there remains an expectation that elected Members attend such for how else can they effectively serve their electorate?

Councillor induction – the support, information and training a new councillor receives has a very real benefit; introducing new councillors to good practice and to the benefits of undertaking training stands them in good stead for their four year term in office.

Being a good employer – Councillors often overlook the fact that they are also deemed an employer, it is therefore crucial Members consider what further guidance or initiatives would best enable councillors to better understand their role and responsibilities, to help the recruit, retain and support the development of the best possible staff in their councils as it is these employees that ultimately provide continuity and consistency in approach.

What support currently exists for underperforming councils? - This varies across County Associations but can include:

- Training for Councillors, Chairmen and Clerks
- Telephone advice line for Councillors, Chairmen and Clerks
- Web based written help desk for Councillors, Chairmen and Clerks
- On-site mentoring and support

While it is recognised that many councils may not agree that they are performing poorly and/or may not seek support, it seems that the level of awareness of what

support is available for those who do agree they need it is low and this a notable concern for the National Improvement Strategy Board.

The Future (2017-2020)

The Improvement and Development Board intended to monitor, via the Local Council Award Scheme, and through participatory sector consultation how Parish and Town Councils perform over the next 3 years. This information is likely to be used to inform future policy, directly affecting the way in which 'local' Parish and Town Councils continue to evolve and further develop to meet the needs of their respective communities.

Jayne Smiles **MSc/FILCM//SIIRSM**

Chief Executive Officer, Responsible Financial Officer & Proper Officer





Head Groundsman's Report

Lydney Town

The Groundstaff have been very busy keeping everywhere clean, safe and tidy this year, working hard throughout the Town. We always keep up the high standards we set so Lydney says looking beautiful to residents and visitors.

The colours of flowers through the Town were the best yet, with everyone enjoying them, different designs and more flowers and bulbs planted.

The Groundstaff have been busy with many jobs, with more weedkilling throughout the Town and more applications.

We have been doing more leaf and litter collections at different parts of the Town. We have also been painting benches and painting areas to brighten up and improve their appearance.

The Groundstaff designed, made and installed a new assault/trim trail at Primrose Hill park, which is well used.

There are more salt bins in Town and sand bags are ready in case of bad weather.

Lydney in Bloom



One of the most enjoyable parts of being Head Groundsman is to work out new planting schemes of displays of flowers each year, trying to keep everything changing and interesting. It is a lot of work for my team to maintain, plant, feed, deadhead and water each year, but the rewards of seeing the colours and having positive, kind comments from people makes it worthwhile.

St Mary's Churchyard and Cemetery

We work hard and take pride in these areas, being respectful at all times.

We keep the grass cut every week during the growing season, as well as brushing paths, weeding, tree maintenance, mole hills tidied, gates and benches painted and litter/leaves collected.

The Garden of Reflection is maintained and is maturing nicely, with the hedge cut, roses pruned and flower beds kept tidy.

Bathurst Park

We have many people using the Park throughout the year, dog walkers, families, children and sports people, as well as different organised events. All of these activities highlight the importance of maintaining the facilities to a high standard. The Groundstaff have been busy with many jobs.



The pond was drained and cleaned out. New plants are going into the pond in the spring. The fish were taken out, counted and checked over (all were found to be healthy), the islands were painted and re-built where needed.

I was lucky to be given the opportunity to undertake a Conservation and Managing Habitat course which has helped to change the way we do things in the Park. With more conservation areas around the Park and more bird boxes, as well as plants to encourage insects. These small changes have helped us see lots of different wildlife including foxes, badgers, rabbits, more hedgehogs than usual, bats, bees, woodpeckers, buzzards and different butterflies – not bad for a small Town Park. It really does have its own eco system.

We are even looking at ways we could recycle more in the Town Parks, especially all the litter.

The flower beds were maintained to a high standard with new displays, more bulbs and standard roses.

A new outdoor fitness trail was added to the Park and is well used.

The Football, Rugby, Cricket, Tennis and Bowls are all maintained well with nice comments from the players who use them.

Lydney Recreation Trust

We have been busy keeping areas clean, safe and tidy. Litter picking and weed killing where necessary.

We entered the River Lyd again cleaning out shopping trolleys, tyres, batteries and even a motorbike. We have painted benches, maintained picnic tables, strimmed grass and trimmed trees where needed.



Overview

The Groundstaff all live in Lydney and have a personal interest to keep the Town beautiful and the work they do to a high standard. We are always looking to provide the best service and value for money to the Town.

We all enjoy our jobs as Groundsmen, working outside in beautiful areas; we feel very lucky.

I am happy and proud to work for Lydney Town Council and would like to thank the Office staff for their help and support throughout the year. I would also like to thank my team, Peter Edwards, Tommy Wales, Anthony Bayliss and Ryan Berryman for their hard work and dedication throughout the year.

James Young
Head Groundsman



Leading Hand - Health & Safety Report

All workers have the right to a safe working environment and at Lydney Town Council this responsibility is taken very seriously.

Our employees are properly trained and certificated for the tasks expected of them and in the safe use of any machinery needed to complete these tasks. This training is on-going with regular refresher courses and updates, as well as courses to provide new skills as and when required. As an example, in recent months I personally have attended courses on such diverse subjects as First Aid, pesticide application and traffic management.

To support the training all tasks are risk assessed to determine the safest way to proceed. These risk assessments are written down for future reference and then reviewed at regular intervals.

As a further support, every item of machinery is checked for safety before and after use, with any defects reported to Management.

Employees are encouraged to always consider their own safety and well-being as well as members of the public who may be affected by any works in progress.

As a result of the aforementioned measures, along with the co-operation of all employees, I am proud to say we have an excellent record of Lydney Town Council with regard to safety and accidents and long may that continue.

Peter Edwards
Leading Hand



County Councillor Report 2017 - 18

Last May I was both honoured and proud to be re-elected to Gloucestershire County Council for the third time to represent the Lydney Division.

As well as serving and substituting on various committees during the last year my colleagues on the County Council Planning Committee elected me to the position of Vice-Chairman.

In January I was appointed by the Council Leader Mark Hawthorne as Cabinet Champion for Planning Infrastructure in Gloucestershire. I am the County Council representative for the newly-formed Forest Economic Partnership.

Lydney Town Council minutes since May 17 have documented comments that I have made in the County Councillors report item, I do not intend to go over "old ground" suffice to say other than mentioning the re-surfacing on Highfield and Bream Road I won't!

We must look forward positively there is no point looking back. No one is more frustrated than me as to why "Our Town" seemingly stagnated in the 80s/90s. We are where we are. I was recently quoted in Punchline - the Gloucestershire Business magazine, in their 2018 Annual:-

"We're a growing town - 80 per cent of the housing planned for the Forest of Dean is planned for Lydney". "There's a lot of positive stuff going on in Lydney. We want to revitalise our town centre and could do with a couple of national chains coming in to the town". "New business and regeneration are not going to come accidentally. There's perception that we're last on the map for handouts in the county. We have to fight our corner"

In reality is "Our Town" any different from any other Town? In the last year I have visited, among others, Trowbridge, Ledbury, Slough, Shepton Mallet and Devizes. All have similar issues to Lydney that serve to concern, frustrate and generate debate. We have to fight OUR corner. We have to have Councillors who leave personal agendas, personal kudos, petty grudges, political-idealism, and negativity behind and are prepared once elected to embrace a "one for all" "all for one" open and transparent stance, otherwise why else would anyone want to put themselves up for election !!? Please tell me!

Lydney Town Councillors Brian Pearman and Harry Ives have both during the year accompanied myself to Shire Hall for the "Lydney Meeting" that I have orchestrated with Senior Officers at Gloucester. Please feel free to ask them their thoughts on "Positivity or Negativity?". The excellent County Strategic Director was "dragged" from Shire Hall last Autumn to see for himself the good, bad and the ugly challenges that "Our Town" has.

I'm delighted to say, that each County Councillor has from April this year £30k to spend on community projects within their Division, £20k on "minor" Highways improvements and in addition the Highways Lengthsman Scheme will deliver 3 weeks of labour within Division.

Personally, my two "Our Town" highlights of the last 12 months - Dean Academy coming out of Special Measures and Lydney Town Brass Band achieving promotion to the National Second Section.

I will continue to parochially progress "Our Town" positively

*County Cllr Alan Preest
Gloucestershire County Council*

Education & Youth Liaison 2017-2018

This has been my second full year as Education & Youth Liaison, having taken on the role in January 2016 with a remit to strengthen ties between the Council and young people.

As I mentioned last year, Lydney is fortunate to be served by a number of exceptional schools and youth groups. With this in mind the Youth Engagement Forum was introduced in June 2016 as a permanent feature of Full Council meetings; facilitating access by students and young people.

This addition has proved popular, and at the time of writing (February 2018) we have welcomed twelve presentations from thirty-nine young people representing Primrose Hill, Severnbanks and Lydney C of E primary schools together with the Dean Academy and our local Sea Cadet branch. As a result, we have heard their perspectives on a range of topics including the condition of Bathurst Park, the draw of local shop fronts, town floral displays, littering, the frequency of community events and the state of local roads. Feedback from their teaching staff tells of a noticeable improvement in the confidence of students who addressed the Council, so the benefits are felt by all parties.

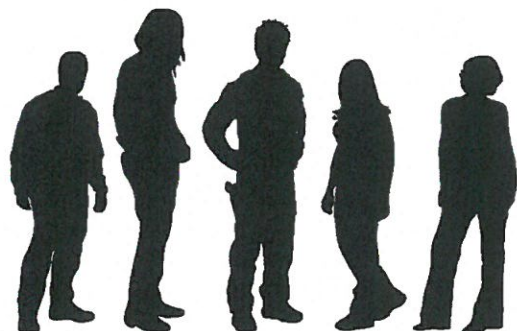
A number of outcomes have arisen from this, principally the community litter pick last year. Pupils from Severnbanks and Primrose Hill primary schools, together with the Dean Academy, St Mary's Church and Lydney Town Council came together to tackle littering around our Town. It was a fantastic afternoon and we hope to hold a second event soon. Similarly, it was through our forum the Council learned of Severnbanks' wish to create floral displays/cultivate a patch of land in Town. I am pleased to say we were able to offer the school an allotment on South Road to accommodate this which was gratefully received.

I was fortunate last summer to be invited to the Dean Academy Awards Evening at St Mary's church. It was pleasing to see such high levels of achievement and how warmly this is celebrated by the school community. The Council were delighted to have financed an additional award category that evening: 'Outstanding Student Community Contribution' - presented by the Mayor. Having attended, it is of no surprise their recent OFSTED report raised the school out of 'special measures' and the school leadership team should be congratulated for this.

As with last year, the Council continues to run a Civic Award Scheme for any young person demonstrating exceptional ability in either arts or sport - £200 in grant funding is made available to the successful applicant. Please get in touch if interested.

Thank you.

Clr Harry Ives
Education & Youth Liaison



Lydney's Flood Management Stakeholder Group 2017 – 2018 Report

Lydney's Flood Management Stakeholder Group has continued to meet on a quarterly basis to address a number of concerns raised in relation to flooding across the Town. The group consists of various stakeholders, these individuals are in a very real position to address specific issues, be it surface water or sewage flood related matters. The meetings have proved very successful to date and we therefore plan to continue them in order the group may keep abreast of new infrastructure permissions and note any affect such may have on existing drainage schemes, to monitor how water run-off is managed in respect to all new development sites and to ensure existing watercourses are not oversubscribed.

Particular noted successes are;

- ❖ The attenuation measures from the bypass through the Hitchins site,
- ❖ Work on the Mead Lane culvert
- ❖ The conversations had with developers regarding Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS).
- ❖ Th work that is being undertaken with the cooperation and input of Bendalls, to improve matters for the residents of Cookson Terrace.

During the course of the year the Environment Agency took the lead role on a 'table top' exercise concentrating on 'rapid response scenarios'. The current Plan was scrutinised and several areas of the existing Plan were identified as being in need of modification to better manage a 'rapid response' emergency. The exercise was very interactive and considered extremely worthwhile by all involved.

The question of Flood Zones and those designations which relate to areas in Lydney and the ability for these maps to influence planning decisions has led to more clarification of this matter which has been contentious in the past.

There remains concern over the capacity of the sewage treatment works and its ability to manage inevitable increased flows as development to the East of Lydney progresses. This will certainly continue to feature on agendas in order to continue the dialogue with Severn Trent on this issue.

Much has been achieved in the last year, and I am sure the group can look forward to continuing the good work next year in the same spirit of cooperation and shared working.

Brian Pearman



Lydney to Parkend Multi-User Track

It has been a busy year for the Lydney to Parkend Multi-User Track Working Group.

The Working Group includes members from West Dean Parish Council, Lydney Town Council, the Forestry Commission, Forest of Dean District Council and Dean Forest Railway.

Lydney Town Council handed over the lead on the project to West Dean Parish Council during the year.

The Group has been regularly meeting, predominantly on site and along the proposed route.

The favoured route has been confirmed as 'The Valley Route'. To ensure the maximum advantage to the cycling and walking public, it has been agreed that the Track should follow, as closely as possible, the contours of the valley to minimise steep gradients.

Most of the work over the year has been focussed on walking every part of the route from Lydney to Whitecroft and beyond to Parkend, to accurately map and pinpoint the route in metre by metre detail.

Within the 'Valley Route' there continue to be options at various pinchpoints, and the Working Group are currently narrowing these down for a definitive final route.

Public appetite for the route, enabling Severnsiders to cycle or walk into the Forest, continues to grow.

James Greenwood