



About Town

Lydney Town Council Newsletter



Lydney Town Council achieves Quality Status



Lydney Town Council was awarded Quality Status in October 2012 through a scheme administered by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC), and is the first of the four Town Councils in the Forest of Dean area to achieve this award.

The Quality Parishes Scheme was introduced in 2003 as part of a drive by the Government to modernise local government and ensure that parish and town councils are in touch with the communities they serve.

To earn the status Lydney Town Council demonstrated to an independent panel that it had met set criteria; that it employs a qualified Officer; (Lydney's Chief Executive Officer, Jayne Smailes holds; WWYC, Certificate In Local Council Administration, CertHE in Community & Local Governance and is hoping to complete her degree in Social Science Sept 2013), it holds regular public meetings, communicates with community and maintains accurate and trans-

parent financial records that have met stringent auditing measures .

Jayne, who has worked for Lydney Town Council for 2 ½ years and who has achieved a 'hat trick' having gained Quality Status for three independent Council's said: "We trust that the Quality Status accreditation will provide our electorate with an assurance that the Town Council is now finally in a position to act for, and on behalf of, the people of Lydney. The Council aims to use this accreditation as a platform upon which it can move forward. There are so many opportunities currently available to local communities via the Localism Act that it's important that both the Town Council and the community as a whole consider each of them and adopts those that are most appropriate".

Mayor; Cllr Bob Berryman added; 'I would like to thank all of the staff for their hard work and dedication and for ensuring that the Council's Policies and Procedures are now correct and that Council is fully compliant with legislation , it is this that has played a significant part in attaining the said award. Whilst the council will hold this

accreditation for a four year term, the attainment of this award is only the beginning of improvements the Council intends to address within Lydney'.

The Town Council, who also earlier this year, gained the 'Power in General Competency' (the first at that time in Gloucestershire) are keen to address and develop 'local' services further, providing value for money to the town's residents. The Council are also currently actively involved in taking forward a Neighborhood Development Plan for Lydney and are keen to encourage anyone with an interest in 'shaping' Lydney's future to contact the Town Council and to join the 'community led' Steering Group.





What does your Town Council do all year?

A good question! The standard answer is that we are the first tier (local council) of a three tier system of local government, with Forest of Dean District Council, and Gloucestershire County Council (local authorities) being the next two tiers, all elected by people in the area.

Parish and Town Councils were formed by an act of parliament in 1894, to look after the interests of those who live within the parish/town community, with the District and County Councils being responsible for health, police, education, planning, litter, public transport & highways amongst

other things.

Parish and Town Councils do however have a wide and varied range of powers in relation to the provision of services and facilities which can and does bring direct benefit to the local community.

What we are *not* is possibly easier to list.

- We are nothing to do with the church, who are governed by Parochial Councils (PCC)
- We are not politically affiliated
- We are not “residents” associations or “lobby” groups
- Town councillors are not paid

However, what we do is represent the residents who live within our Parish in matters of local government. Some of these include:

- Local Planning (which covers anything from satellite dishes to new developments and roads)
- Economic development
- Environmental matters
- Community projects
- Leisure and recreation
- Contact with the District and County Council
- Complaints(!)
- Information and advice

As Lydney continues to grow and prosper, the representational aspect becomes increasingly more important. Decisions taken by the District and County Councils may vitally affect the quality of life within our town, therefore the role of the Town Council is of utmost importance.

What are Village Agents?

Village Agents try to provide easier access to services and information for the over fifties. In reality they put clients in touch with people or organisations who may be able to help with their particular problems.

The services offered include; the Fire Home Safety Officers from Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service who can come to your home at a time and date convenient to you, and fit free smoke alarms as required and carry out fire safety checks in your homes. The Care and Repair Service who can undertake small jobs such as fitting security door chains to your external doors or fitting shelving and other small works in your home, providing it is not at height.

Village Agents have contacts



with services such as the Forest of Dean CAB, Forest of Dean Age Concern, various volunteer transport services such as Dial a Ride or Bream Transport. They can also locate services that will help with benefits and other claims.

Many of you may not know that

there is a service run via the District Council which provides Cardiac Rehabilitation exercise classes at various local venues and also runs falls prevention classes. These last two services must be with the consent and referral of your own GP. Village Agent support services such as: luncheon clubs, assisting with the setting up such clubs with help from the ‘In Touch’ group at Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC), for whom all Village Agents work.

If you wish to contact a Village Agent in confidence for help with any problems please telephone Mike Morgan (left) on; 07776 245712 or email: mike@communityagents.grcc.org.uk.

All Village Agents have CRB (Police) clearance so that they can visit you in the privacy of your own home if you wish.

Should anyone wish for Mike to visit their club or organisation to talk about this work, please contact him on the number listed above.

Our Community Our Future'

This is the time of year when the Council starts to think about its plans for the next year and its commitment to our townspeople to provide ongoing improvements in the town and to ensure that everyone benefits from what is achieved.

Previously Council have contributed to a Parish Plan, known as 'Turning the Tide', this together with the document produced in partnership with FODDC – The Lydney Area Action Plan has provided a complete survey of what the town offers, the nature and the needs of the population and where the town needs to improve. These were not just paper exercises as the process involved full consultation with the public, producing an Action Plan which concentrated on the main areas for improvement such as the affordable housing, health and provision for the elderly, the local economy, the needs of young people and traffic and transport.

Since the DRAFT Action Plan was launched many things have been achieved. A good number of affordable houses have been provided and whilst some improvements have been achieved in elderly provision the main battle has been to hang onto what we have already got and I think that we have been successful in this objective to date. The skateboard park has been completed and some improvements to the recreation ground have been made. Car Parking and Rural Transport is still a problem and although this is somewhat of a moving target we are starting to grasp the nettle.

But of course a community never

stands still, challenges appear almost on a monthly basis. The council is therefore starting to look at what is needed in the town in order to prepare an Action Plan for the next three - five years and the changes to legislation through that of the Localism Act, reforming Planning etc is set to provide the community with the power to be heard. This will involve once again the whole community in raising issues and more importantly becoming part of the solution and consultation sessions will be planned to achieve just this. The result will be a Neighbourhood Development Plan (if this is what you, the community believe is called for) from which an invaluable Action Plan will once again be produced so as to provide the new focus for Council activity and improvement.

It is important that we to look at our wider community and maybe also the needs of neighbouring parishes that rely on Lydney to provide our services and amenities. There is a sense of rural isolation as public transport services become more and more restricted as facilities

become more and more centralised. Our community facilities become more and more inadequate and in great need of refurbishment, some concentrated thinking will have to take place so that vital improvement can take place.

Just how many new houses can Lydney sustain?

It is true that we have to have continuous growth and maintain existing services but there must be a limit on the number of people who can comfortably live in Lydney. It is difficult to achieve a balance between sustainable growth and becoming a large dormitory town with people travelling daily to seek work in other places. It is these kind of challenges that the Town Council will be uncovering and exploring with your assistance, identifying possible solutions which are achievable and will provide us all with major improvements.

'Why not take the opportunity to become actively involved in shaping Lydney – watch this space for info on the NDP Steering Group formation or visit our Website; www.lydneytowncouncil.co.uk'

HAVE YOUR SAY!

Although your Town Councillors may be contacted at any time should you have any form of concern, this Newsletter is an excellent way to bring your views, ideas, concerns and comments to a wider audience - in other words, to everyone within our community!

Any subject is permitted;

You may wish to ask a question
(replies printed in the same edition wherever possible)

You may like to 'air' a concern or just generally pass comment relating to a community issue?

Whatever your thoughts, the Town Council cannot assist if they are unaware — so help us to change this

**C/O Lydney Town Council,
Council Chambers Claremont House,
High Street,
Lydney GL15 5DX.**

Your views matter!



Don't Forget!



Winter's here,

Please check on your elderly neighbours!



Photograph by David Howell

The Firework display in Bathurst Park went well, many people commenting that it was the best display that they had attended

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Town Councillors

Bob Berryman (Mayor)	842036
Derek Biddle	842180
Ruth Bonser	841813
David Edwards	840106
Carol Harris	841026
Janice James	843847
Charlotte Matthews	836105
Sue Osborne	841970
Brian Pearman	841452
Alan Preest	564107
Brian Thomas	842373
Georgina Thompson	840207

Town & District Councillors

Valerie Hobman	841079
William Osborne	841970

Town & County Councillor

David Cooksley	844351
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District Councillors

James Bevan	842146
Judy Davis	842884
Terry Glastonbury	562102
Marion Winship	528289

Council Staff

Chief Executive Officer/RFO	
– Mrs Jayne Smailes	842234
Executive Officer	
– Miss Carol Wheeler	
Finance Assistant	
– Mrs Hilary Exton	



Merry Christmas

Winter is in the air and a new year just around the corner, a time when family and friends gather to reaffirm old bonds and remember absent loved ones, a time of good will –

A Merry Christmas to you from Lydney Town Council

Visit our website at www.lydneytowncouncil.co.uk