



**ANNUAL TOWN MEETING  
REPORTS 2021/2022**

# CONTENTS

	Page
<b>Agenda</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Annual Town Meeting Minutes</b> ( <i>Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2019</i> ) .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Mayor's Report</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Annual Town Council Committee Reports:</b>	
❖ <b>Planning and Highways Committee</b> .....	<b>7</b>
❖ <b>Amenities Committee</b> .....	<b>8</b>
❖ <b>Burial Committee</b> .....	<b>9</b>
❖ <b>Finance and Scrutiny Committee</b> .....	<b>10</b>
❖ <b>Personnel Committee</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>Head Groundsman's Report</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>Climate and Flood Prevention Report</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>Gloucestershire County Councillor's Report</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>Trust Reports:</b>	
❖ <b>Bathurst Park and Recreation Trust</b> .....	<b>18</b>
❖ <b>Lydney Recreation Trust</b> .....	<b>19</b>
❖ <b>The Coffee House</b> .....	<b>20</b>
<b>Community Reports:</b>	
❖ <b>Friends of Bathurst Pool</b> .....	<b>21</b>
❖ <b>Dial A Ride</b> .....	<b>22</b>
❖ <b>Friends of Lydney Hospital</b> .....	<b>23</b>
❖ <b>Lydney Harbour Team</b> .....	<b>24</b>
❖ <b>Royal British Legion</b> .....	<b>26</b>
❖ <b>Lydney War Memorial Trust</b> .....	<b>28</b>
❖ <b>Lydney Town Hall Trust</b> .....	<b>29</b>
❖ <b>Lydney Hub</b> .....	<b>30</b>
❖ <b>Churches Together in Lydney</b> .....	<b>31</b>
❖ <b>Forest Read Easy Deal (FRED)</b> .....	<b>32</b>
❖ <b>Lydney Twinning Association</b> .....	<b>33</b>
❖ <b>Lydney Community Centre</b> .....	<b>34</b>
❖ <b>Victoria Centre</b> .....	<b>35</b>
<b>Lydney Town Council's Contact Details and Opening Hours</b> .....	<b>37</b>



# Annual Town Meeting

to be held at the Community Centre, Naas Lane, Lydney  
at 7pm on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2022

## AGENDA

Chair – Councillor Anne Harley, Mayor of Lydney

1. Apologies
2. Approval of the Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2019
3. Climate Emergency
  - Forest of Dean District Councillors on their Council's response
  - Lydney Town Councillors on Environmental Projects and Plastic Free Lydney
4. The Mayor's Report – to include noting reports from:
  - Lydney's County and District Councillors
  - Bathurst Park and Recreation Trust and Lydney Recreation Ground Trust
  - various community organisations
5. Public Questions - (note: the Annual Town Meeting is an opportunity for members of the public to ask questions and make proposals and comments. No advance notice is required, but answers may have to be researched and provided at a later date)
6. Close

**At the close of the formal part of the meeting, attendees may visit stalls promoting various town organisations. Light refreshments will be served at no charge**

**SJ Holley**  
Town Clerk

**5<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

For more information contact Lydney Town Council on 01594 842234, or  
[info@lydneytowncouncil.co.uk](mailto:info@lydneytowncouncil.co.uk)

**Annual Town Meeting  
Held at Lydney Town Hall, Lydney  
Monday 18 March 2019 at 7.00 pm**

**Present:** Lydney Town Council

B Berryman (Mayor), D Biddle, R Christodoulides, J Greenwood, C Harris,  
R Holmes, H Ives, W Leach, C Legg, B Pearman and A Preest

Mrs J Smailes - Chief Executive Officer  
Miss C Wheeler - Executive Officer  
Miss A Crawshaw – Grants and Events Administrator

Gloucestershire Police  
PCSO T Oliver, Neighbourhood Policing Team

50 Members of the Public

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Cllr 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.

Cllr Berryman requested that two minutes silence be observed to remember those who had lost their lives due to the recent atrocities carried out in New Zealand.

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received and noted from Cllrs Tremlett and White.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the Annual Town Meeting dated 23 April 2018 were confirmed and approved as a true record and duly signed. **Proposed by Cllr Harris, seconded by Cllr Ives.** Unanimous.

3. **MAYOR'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2018/19** – Cllr B Berryman

Cllr Berryman read out his report, as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2018/2019.

Cllr Berryman highlighted the number of superb amenities which were provided in the Town; the fact that Bathurst Park and the Cemetery were maintained to a high standard; improvements which had been conducted to the drainage system on Lydney Recreation Ground to enable it to continue to be used for sports; the floral displays provided through Lydney in Bloom; the reduction in the risk of flooding to residential properties through partnership working. Cllr Berryman reminded all present that a number of years prior the Council had been subject to a Public Interest Report; since then the Council had attained Quality Gold Status and conducted in-house financial audits. However, Cllr Berryman expressed his disappointment that the Council continued to receive criticism both from members of the public and Councillors and he stressed that the Council could not have achieved all that it had without its CEO and dedicated staff.

The Mayor then made the following presentations on behalf of the Council:

- Millie Howells – Mayor's Civic Award Recipient 2018/2019
- Able Cadet Summer Elliott, Forest of Dean Sea Cadets – Mayor's Cadet for 2018/2019 – award at end of Term of Office
- Cllr Derek Biddle – Long service Award

4. **ANNUAL POLICE REPORT**

PCSO Tom Oliver read out the Police report, as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2018/2019.

5. **ANNUAL TOWN COUNCIL REPORTS**

**Planning & Highway Committee** – Cllr Preest

Cllr Preest read out the Committee's report, as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2018/2019

**Amenities Committee** – Cllr Harris

Cllr Harris read out the Committee's report, as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2018/2019.

**Burial Committee** – Cllr Ives

Cllr Ives read out the Committee's report as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2018/2019.

**Finance and Scrutiny Committee** – Cllr Pearman

Cllr Pearman reminded all present that Ordinary elections would shortly take place for the Town, which may result in the formation of the Council looking different after May.

Cllr Pearman then read out the Committee's report as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2018/2019.

A presentation was then made on behalf of the Council by Cllr Pearman to the outgoing Mayor, Cllr Bob Berryman, of a Past Mayor's Badge, together with a bouquet of flowers to the outgoing Mayoress, Mrs Sheila Berryman. Cllr Pearman gave a short speech on the work undertaken by Cllr Berryman during his time as Mayor.

6. **COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT**

County Cllr Preest stated that he felt privileged to have worked with Cllr Berryman and expressed regret that he had elected not to stand in the forthcoming elections.

County Cllr Preest then read out his report as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2018/2019.

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 2018/2019.

**Lydney Recreation Trust** – Trustee Harris

Trustee Ives read out the Trust's report, as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2018/2019.

8. **COMMUNITY REPORTS**

**Forest Foodbank** – Mr R Simpson

Mr Berryman read out the report, as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2018/2019.

**Friends of Lydney Hospital** – Mr A Midgeley

Mr Midgeley read out the report, as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2018/2019.

Mr Midgeley expressed thanks to the Mayor and Mayoress, Cllr and Mrs Bob Berryman, for their support over the years.

**Lydney War Memorial Trust** – Mr S Moore

Mr Moore read out the report, as contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2018/2019.

**Lydney Coastal Communities Team** – Mrs W Jackson, Regeneration Manager

Mrs Jackson précised the report which was contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2018/2019.

**The Royal British Legion Lydney Branch** – Mr M Rudge

Mr Rudge précised the report which was contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2018/2019. Mr Rudge also stressed the need for new members to join in order to keep the Branch going and that there was no requirement for members to be ex-members of the armed forces.

**Lydney Town Hall Trust** – Mr C Knight

Mr Knight read out the report which was contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2018/2019.

**Lydney Hub** – Ms E Pettiford

Ms Pettiford read out the report which was contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2018/2019.

**Churches Together in Lydney** – Mr W Leach

Mr Leach expressed thanks to Cllrs Berryman and Biddle for their community work and also expressed thanks to everyone else involved in community groups. Mr Leach then précised the report which was contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2018/2019.

**Lydney Tennis Club** – Ms N Salter

Ms Salter read out the report which was contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2018/2019.

**Lydney Rugby Football Club** – Mr r Beswick

Mr Beswick read out the report which was contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2018/2019.

**Lydney Football Club** – Mr D Voss

Cllr Berryman advised that Mr Voss had been unable to attend the meeting and then proceeded to read out the report which was contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2018/2019.

**Dean Forest Railway** – Mr J Shirley

Mr Shirley read out the report which was contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2018/2019.

**Friends of Bathurst Pool** – Mr B Berryman

Mr Berryman read out the report which was contained in the Council's Annual Report for 2018/2019.

9. **RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS RECEIVED**  
No questions had been received prior to the deadline.

10. **CLOSE**  
The meeting closed at 9.01 pm.

All attendees were provided with a copy of the Annual Town Meeting Report 2018/2019 (copy available to download from the Town Council's website after the meeting) as they left the Town Hall.

# Mayors Report

The last year has continued to be a difficult one for everyone in our town. Covid 19 has taken its toll both on our personal lives, businesses and the life of our community. As we leave the worst of Covid (hopefully) behind, Lydney Town Council is looking forward with some optimism to what lies ahead.

In spite of the difficulties of the last 12 months, the council has been able to make some achievements that have brightened our lives. The Community Event in September was a huge success and the weather was with us for a lovely time for the community to get together. In partnership with the Bathurst Park Trust, the fireworks event was the best attended in many years and, although it was not our intention to make a big profit, we did; which has enabled us to invest in bigger, brighter events in the future. The reintroduction of the Christmas Parade was a lot of fun, as was the market and event at the Town Hall.

Working with our partners Place Studio, we initiated the Lydney Forward consultation to see what needed to be done in the High Street to help to regenerate the town. Lots of suggestions were made and we have been able to put together a number of projects. Lead councillors have put together a number of displays for this meeting to show you the progress so far.

We will be launching the review of our Neighbourhood Development Plan this month, which will focus on how we want the town to develop during the next 5 - 10 years. With the help again of our partners, Place Studios, we will be working towards a revised plan that will help guide decision making on planning decisions in the town.

The Council has developed a Strategic Plan that will guide the focus of the council's efforts to make improvements to the town over the next few years, and to provide a measurement of progress on the projects we have identified.

All in all, it looks like it is going to be a busy 2022/23; so, to help us get it all done we have set up a number of working parties which will encourage local people to get involved and to bring their expertise to help us achieve our goals. If you are interested in environmental issues, improving our leisure facilities, improving transport and travel, or tidying up our High Street, do get in touch as we would love to have you on board.

**Cllr Anne Harley**

Mayor



## **Planning and Highways Committee**

Because Lydney Town Council is not a planning authority this Committee's primary function is to consider all planning applications and make recommendations to the local planning authority, Forest of Dean District Council. Our detailed local knowledge gives us an insight into the implications of applications such as noise, pollution, traffic, the environment, jobs and facilities etc on an immediate area and the town as a whole. It is also our duty to see that no applications infringe or run contrary to our existing Neighbourhood Development Plan. Planning legislation is drawn up by the national government, but we have the opportunity to interpret them to suit our local needs and desires. The District Council is under no obligation to take notice of our recommendations, but in practice they usually concur with our decisions. All residents have the opportunity to lobby both this Committee and attend our regular monthly planning meetings, and the planning authority with any concerns they have over any planning applications.

On transportation issues we are similarly constrained by legislation, in this case by the County Council (the Highways Authority) which owns and manages all of our roads and paths. Our main job has been to lobby for improved road and pavement conditions and make the police aware of local speeding and parking issues.

Last year's public consultation has made us aware of the popular concern regarding the amount of traffic in the town centre and so this year the Committee will be presenting traffic reduction and improved pedestrianisation plans for the town to be part of our new Neighbourhood Development Plan. We have two years to complete this so there will be opportunities for further public consultation with these proposals.

**Cllr Steve Stockham**

Chair

## **Amenities Committee Report**

This is my first year as Chair of the Amenities and I have enjoyed the experience, despite the restrictions caused by Covid 19, which were coped with by all the staff, who ensured that the Council continued despite all the obstacles

The Town Council's Ground staff deserve our thanks for the wonderful way they have maintained the planters throughout Lydney as well as their excellent care of Bathurst Park, the Recreation ground and other areas. This is especially true about the Mesne which has seen a vast improvement in the condition of the grassed areas which were so uneven.

The Christmas parade was reintroduced last year and it was lovely to see so many happy people lining the route to welcome Santa. The procession to the Town Hall became longer as the crowds joined on as it went pass. The number of children meeting Santa in his grotto, having their faces painted and having a festive balloon was wonderful. Lydney Training band, choirs from the three junior schools and the Springfield Singers delighted the Town Hall audience with their festive renditions.

The Easter Egg Hunt and Easter bonnet competition in Bathurst Park was very well attended and children of all ages got involved in planting seeds and various craft decorating activities, making their own masterpieces.

I would like to give my thanks to all the volunteers that made the event possible, especially the Lead Councillor who worked so hard to make it so wonderful.

Finally, I would like to confirm the Jubilee celebrations that are planned for 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> June are a Children's Day, Music Day and Proms in the Park. The official celebrations to plant two Oak Trees, receive a Royal Proclamation and the lighting of the Beacon on the mesne on the 2<sup>nd</sup> June.

These events are showcasing local groups and hope that you are able to attend and show your support.

**Cllr Sue Holmes**

Chair

## **Burial Committee**

The two most important duties of the Burial committee are to provide burial space to bury our dead and to keep detailed records of who is buried where. Lydney burial ground is likely to be full within the next three to four years so we have been both searching for a new site and putting council funds aside to pay for the land when we find it. In the last year we have identified two possible sites, but one has a water table too high to pass regulations and the other piece of land proved not to be for sale to us. If we are unable to find a suitable site, legislation allows us to use a site in one of the surrounding villages, but I believe that Lydney residents would treat this as a far from satisfactory solution and a last resort. Consequently, the search for a new location continues to be our top priority.

Last year we lost our member of staff with the knowledge and experience of dealing with the complex and detailed recording of burials and this committee would like to record our thanks and appreciation to Leanne Gay and the rest of the office staff for stepping up to the task of learning and executing this task, especially as we were very short staffed at the time.

I am pleased to report that the significant majority of the feedback we have received is complimentary of the work our grounds team put into maintaining the Cemetery. On top of routine maintenance, they have also provided a water tank at the far end reducing the walking and carrying residents have to do to keep graveside flowers watered.

Last year we agreed a budget to plant in front of the chain-link fencing between the cemetery and the path to Lych Gate Mews. This will consist of climbing, flowering plants and planting will start this Spring.

The Churchyard has been full for a number of years and when this happens the responsibility for maintenance transfers from the Church to the Council. We have a number of tabletop graves in the churchyard, many of which have fallen into disrepair and because of the weight of the stones could have health and safety issues. The diocese has commissioned a report on the condition of these and what will be needed to make these safe, but because most of them are grade II listed monuments we have to follow strict guidelines for any work we do on them. Before we receive this report, it is difficult to estimate the amount of work needed or its cost, but based on similar sites it is likely to cost around £20,000 over the next ten years.

**Cllr Steve Stockham**

Committee Chair

# Finance and Scrutiny Committee

## Overall

The Council is in a very secure position financially, due in part by the examination of budgets by the relevant Committees. Of course, the pandemic has also played a part in that some activities have been curtailed.

One major accounting change has been in the treatment of VAT with estimates now being prepared on a net basis. In the past they were prepared gross and VAT refunds taken into the reserves.

## Council Tax

Despite inflationary pressures our part of the Council Tax for a band D property is still lower than it was for 2019/20. This is helped by a combination of the Council keeping the overall Budget down and the growth in new properties in the town which has allowed for increases to be spread over a larger number of households.

The Council Tax figures for this year and the three previous years are:

2022/23 = £197.31 (increase of £8.41 or 4.45% - less than inflation)  
2021/22 = £188.90 (cut by £9.49 from the previous year)  
2020/21 = £198.39 (frozen at the previous year's cost)  
2019/20 = £198.39

## Grants

Grants Received - The Council has more actively pursued grants from other bodies and used them mainly to subsidise events which have been appreciated by residents. Particularly Christmas and the Community Event held in Bathurst Park in September. In total, grants received amounted to £27,386.

Grants Awarded - The Council awards grants to various community bodies, usually after detailed consideration by the Committee. The following grants were awarded in 2021/22:

- Lydney Community Centre - £2,000 towards new boiler
- Lydney Town Hall Trust - £2,822 towards repair of the roof
- Lydney Town Hall Trust - £1,000 to support the installation of fire boarding.
- Lydney Youth AFC - £1,000 towards the creation of a refreshment kiosk
- Red Cross - £500 towards humanitarian relief

## Reserves

The reserves have grown, some have been earmarked for specific projects and the remainder are general reserves which for use in an emergency situation and as a working balance. The reserves as at 31 March 2022 are shown in the Financial Report.

## Conclusion

So, we enter 2022/3 in a healthy position despite the grim forecasts for the general economy.

**Cllr Roger Holmes**

Chair, Finance and Scrutiny Committee

**DRAFT FIGURES** - subject to year-end closedown of the Council's accounting software  
**Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2021/22 for**

**LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

	Year ending		Notes and guidance	
	31 March 2021 £	31 March 2022 £		
1. Balances brought forward	508,167	578,602	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.	
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	579,240	579,240	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.	
3. (+) Total other receipts	39,247	58,762	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.	
4. (-) Staff costs	308,348	290,220	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.	
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	15,287	15,287	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).	
6. (-) All other payments	226,417	250,398	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).	
7. (=) Balances carried forward	578,602	660,699	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).	
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	590,027	672,343	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – <b>To agree with bank reconciliation.</b>	
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	626,350	630,290	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.	
10. Total borrowings	41,406	28,411	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).	
11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	Yes	No	N/A	The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
	✓			N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2022 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.  
 Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

Date

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

as recorded in minute reference:

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

*These accounting statements (subject to amendment) will be presented to the Council for approval on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2020*

## **Personnel Committee**

Covid 19 has made operating the Council administration very difficult, with staff having to work from home, and we recognise that we have not been able to offer the service we would wish to.

Two of our long-standing staff left for pastures new in June 2021 and recruiting in the uncertainties of Covid proved a challenge.

Leanne joined us, first as a temp, but now as a permanent member of staff, taking on whatever has been thrown at her, including learning Cemetery Management from the ground up. We are delighted that Leanne has agreed to join us permanently.

We commissioned the Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils to undertake a full staffing evaluation to help us plan for the future and make sure we have the staff we need to fulfil the Council's objectives, and also to be sure that our staff are rewarded properly for their efforts. We have adopted most of the recommendations of that report.

Recruitment of an Assistant Clerk proved particularly difficult with our first advertisement over the Christmas period resulting in no suitable applicants. Our second attempt brought us a number of well qualified applicants from outside local government, and we were delighted to offer Louise a full-time position from March.

With our office staff now up to full strength and Covid restrictions now removed, we are hopeful that service will return to the high standards you expect once our new staff have found their feet.

And a personal thank you from the members of the Personnel Committee to Stephen and Carolyn, who have moved heaven and earth to keep the Council on track during this very difficult time. Not forgetting of course, our amazing Grounds Team who have worked throughout to make our town and recreation spaces look fantastic and a real asset to the wellbeing of us all.

**Cllr Anne Harley**

Chair of the Personnel Committee

# Head Groundsman's Report

## **Lydney Town**

The Grounds staff have been extremely busy and working hard again over the past year on keeping the town clean, safe and colourful. We always set high standards so Lydney continues to look beautiful to residents and visitors alike.

This year there has been more emphasis than ever on environment, wildlife and nature, including establishing wild flower and grass meadows which provide an insect corridor for them to explore.

We are continually looking at ways to help nurture nature and this has been introducing bird boxes, bat boxes, leaving areas uncut for hedgehogs, foxes and rabbits to live within our extensive green spaces as well as more simple things like leaving trees to rot after they have fallen encouraging many insects.

This year our bedding plants have been carefully chosen for their pollination to help bees thrive.

## **Bathurst Park**

This is an area we always enjoy keeping beautiful as families enjoy it so much. In readiness for the Queens Jubilee special flower beds have already been planted. Every year we try and improve the range of colours by adding more flowers.

## **St Mary's Churchyard and Cemetery**

The Grounds staff take pride in this area being respectful at all times. We will be planting clematis along the fence later this spring to produce a wall of colour in future years which overtime will cover the existing unsightly fence.

A new water butt has been placed near the grounds hut to help people when tending to their loved ones grave as it means they no longer have to carry water over long distances.

## **Lydney Recreation Trust**

We have established a wildflower area along the canal and are increasing the number of car park spaces at the topside of the lake.

## **Overview**

The Grounds staff enjoy the work they do and take pride in keeping standards high in all areas that we are responsible for and we feel very lucky to work within such beautiful areas.

I would like to thank my team for all their continued hard work and also the office staff for their support.

## **James Young**

Head Groundsman

# Climate and Flood Prevention

## Climate Emergency

The Climate and Ecological Emergencies are the reason I stood for election to the FoDDC in 2019. The district council is striving to achieve carbon neutrality for the district by 2030 and has helped establish the Forest of Dean Climate Action Partnership in an effort to make that happen. The partnership involves residents, schools, community groups, businesses, councils, charities – the whole community.

If we are going to avoid catastrophic and irreversible climate change it's vital we do all we can as individuals and as a community. It's also vital that the Government takes emergency action consistent with the Climate Emergency it has declared. It needs to fund and roll out a nationwide programme to insulate our homes and help residents switch to renewable energy sources. It needs to change national planning policy so that all new housing developments are carbon neutral. It needs to stop digging for new gas and oil fields, abandon fracking for good and invest properly in renewable energy.

## Forest of Dean

Over the last year I have been involved in flood prevention work, particularly in Aylburton, encouraging the implementation of Natural Flood Management measures to prevent residential flooding. i.e. holding water back for longer upstream to enable brooks, ditches and drainage downstream to cope. If done properly it's good for biodiversity and effective as a flood prevention method.

I am working to improve road safety: get 20 mph limits established wherever people live in Gloucestershire, implement other appropriate speed limit reductions, increase the number of cycle lanes and cycle routes, install effective (24/7) traffic calming and get more crossings where pedestrians and cyclists have priority. In other words, establish a healthier, more balanced relationship between our communities and the vehicles that drive through them.

I am involved in work to improve biodiversity, particularly changing the way we manage road verges and other grassland so that nature benefits. Three sites in Lydney (Livia Way, Centurion Road and Newerne Street overflow car park) are part of a biodiversity trial, now in its second year. All Aylburton's large A48 verges are now managed for wildlife.

At FoDDC I am a Licensing Committee member and represent the council on the Lower Severn Internal Drainage Board.

I attend Planning Policy portfolio support & Climate Emergency portfolio support meetings. I have managed to get motions passed at FoDDC council in support of:

- The Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill
- Gloucestershire-wide 20 mph limits for where people live.

## Mark Topping

FoDDC ward councillor for Lydney West & Aylburton



# Gloucestershire County Councillor's Report

Following the Gloucestershire County Council Elections which took place in May last year I was re-elected for my fourth term as County Councillor for the Lydney Division.

After serving as County Council Vice-Chairman during civic years 2019/2020 and 2020/2021. I was elected by my County colleagues as County Council Chairman for this current civic year 2021/2022, a position that I fundamentally see as a great honour for the Lydney Division and indeed the wider Forest of Dean.

Duties as Chairman include;

- being the civic leader of Gloucestershire
- promoting the interest and reputation of the County Council and Gloucestershire and acting as an ambassador for both
- carrying out civic, community and ceremonial activities and fostering community identity and pride
- presiding over meetings of the full Council to ensure that its business is carried out fairly and efficiently.

I have carried out numerous duties as GCC Chairman, highlights include;

- Planting a tree for the Queens Green Canopy Platinum Jubilee Celebrations (in blustery conditions!) with Gloucestershire Deputy Lieutenant and Broadcaster Sybil Roscoe.
- The opening ceremony of the Three Choirs Festival at Worcester Cathedral.
- Attending the 70th Anniversary "Glorious Glosters" Battle of the Imjin River Korea commemoration weekend at the Imjin Barracks and then Gloucester Cathedral alongside The Sheriff of Gloucestershire being introduced to HRH Prince Charles and all the excellent staff and volunteers at the Wildfowl and Wetland Trust Slimbridge.
- Re-signing and reinvigorating the Gloucestershire Armed Forces Community Covenant.
- Attending Gloucester Cathedral for the Headquarters Allied Rapid Reaction Corp (ARRC) "Service of Lessons and Carols".

Recently the GCC Leader Cllr Mark Hawthorne MBE and myself jointly sent a message of support to the Officer Commanding ARRC Lieutenant General Nick Borton DSO MBE which included;

"It has been awful to watch war break out once again on our continent. We know that the people of Gloucestershire have been appalled and moved by the heart-breaking stories coming out of Ukraine. At times like these, we are reminded of the debt of gratitude that we owe men and women like yourselves. In these worrying times we wish you and your command, on behalf of all people in Gloucestershire, a safe and steadfast journey").

GCC unequivocally supports the people of Ukraine. We, as Members, are updated very regularly on the continually developing situation regarding Gloucestershire and Ukrainian refugees.

I work very closely with the Gloucestershire Lieutenancy particularly regarding the County's United Kingdom Citizenship Ceremonies. I must congratulate Lydney North resident and Deputy Lieutenant Mr Roger Deeks, who, with effect from 10 Apr 22

has been appointed for a term of 3 years to the position of Vice- Lord Lieutenant. 2i/c to the Lord Lieutenant Edward Gillespie OBE.

As I said in my acceptance speech when I was appointed as GCC Chairman. "We represent a wonderful and diverse and simply special County. There is no doubt that we will have robust political debate over the next few years. But let's try and embrace positivity and let's try and have smiles on our faces"

My other roles at GCC include membership of; Appeals Board, Appeals Committee, Audit and Governance Committee, Devon and Severn Inland Fishing Conservation Area, Environment Scrutiny Committee, Forest Surface Water Flood Forum, Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Traffic Regulation Committee.

It goes without saying that parochial, community representation, and challenge when necessary, occurs as and when required. Space prevents elaborating on individual issues, but I normally report and update when events/circumstances occur.

The Harbour Road improvement programme continues to frustrate. Quite why Forest of Dean District Council handed over the Highways element to the GCC Cabinet on the 20th Dec 19 when basic potential Planning issues remained unresolved, at that stage GCC were not made aware, which subsequently has resulted in such delay is beyond comprehension and one has to question the due diligence of the Forest Council. Forecast date for commencement is now June 2022.

I have been delighted that Lydney Town Cllrs Tash Saunders and Carol Harris have been able to attend GCC Full Council Meetings of late.

I regularly continue to meet, on Lydney specific issues, as I have done so since 2013 with GCC Strategic Director Mr Simon Excell and his team. Section 106 Developer contributions attributable to GCC are administered correctly and efficiently by GCC.

I meet regularly with the GCC Local Highways Manager Stu Budd in the Lydney Division - Brian Watkins, Stu's predecessor has been deservedly promoted within GCC. (I have included Cllrs Claire Vaughan, Mark Topping and Carol Harris in recent meetings with Stu).

My District colleague Cllr Harry Ives and myself hosted a visit to Lydney with the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (and our District Council colleague) Nick Evans. Dialogue continues with Nick on Policing issues.

GCC sourced "20s Plenty" speed signs have recently been erected around the Lydney Division by Cllrs Ives, Topping and myself.

Congratulations to Lydney Town Band for their excellent 5th placing in the Third Section of the West of England Brass Band Championships.

GCC Build Back Better - Market Town Scheme.  
£10,000 was awarded to Lydney Town Council towards the 2021 Christmas/Winter Festival Event.

GCC Build Back Better - County Councillors led initiative. (Funding Remains available).

Significant grants that have been awarded recently or are in the pipeline include;

- Primrose Hill School
- Forest Sensory
- Aylburton School
- Lydney RFC
- Lydney CE School
- Springfield Singers Ladies Choir
- Severnbanks School
- Lydney Football Club
- Forest of Dean U3A
- Lydney Cricket Club
- Charlie (Cancer Organisation)
- Forest of Dean Waterways
- Forest Active Community Trust
- Forest Read Easy Deal (FRED)

I am also one of the three District Councillors who represent Lydney East on Forest of Dean District Council. At Forest I am the Chairman of the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The way forward must incorporate teamwork and positivity.

**Cllr Alan Preest**

Chairman  
Gloucestershire County Council.

## **Bathurst Park and Recreation Trust**

As like the recreational trust Bathurst Park had a strange year without children playing on the play equipment and the coffee shop closed for long periods. The trust still hope people were able to enjoy this beautiful park and setting for a walk and fresh air.

We did allow one event in the park in June 2020 - a Black Lives Matter celebration of black culture. It is fair to say the event was controversial because of the timing but it went ahead successfully and peacefully.

In July the Gloucestershire Army Cadet Force held a 'Beating Retreat' event with a military brass band playing in the park, which was another special evening.

On 4<sup>th</sup> September 2021 there was a very successful community event celebrating everything good about Lydney. Local food vendors, local brass and rock bands, the Scouts, the Sea Cadets and the British Legion were all there in force celebrating the town opening up. It was a very special day and thanks must go out to all of the Town Councillors, particularly Councillor Tasha Saunders and all the many volunteers who made this a terrific community effort.

On November 5<sup>th</sup> the traditional Lydney firework and bonfire night returned after a two-year break; a fantastic evening with record attendances. There were too many people for the caterers to handle so we hope to have more local stalls this year.

The coffee shop is now open and actively trading again. The trust would like to say a big thank you to June who is leaving the shop after a number of years and wish her all the best in the future. There is a new tenant replacing June.

In the future we are looking to replace some of the existing play equipment and maybe turn the tennis clubs into multi sports use i.e. football, basketball etc. The trust would like to tidy up the perimeter fencing and improve the lighting on the avenue.

A big thanks to James and all his ground staff team who make the Park so beautiful all year round. A very special park - Lydney's 'Jewel in the Crown'.

**Richard Kemsley**

Trust Chair

# Lydney Recreation Trust

Due to covid restrictions these reports will include some events from 2020. I did not report on the two trusts that year because of the national restrictions.

In December 2020 the trust experienced severe flooding; all the sports club houses were badly damaged and the tennis courts were ruined. It is testament to the resolve of all the sports clubs that they were all quickly up and running. The tennis club now has six fantastic new tennis courts and the club is absolutely thriving. Unfortunately, the flooding issue is not going to go away as these events seem to occur more and more frequently. The following day the water had all gone so the drainage on the trust ground which is fairly new is working very effectively. I would like to thank the cricket and football clubs for monitoring the pump house.

Unfortunately, due to the Covid restrictions, there was little active sport played on the grounds for almost a year. I am happy to report that they are all being used as normal at the present time. We hope walks around the lake and grounds were of some comfort to residents during covid.

The skateboard is still being used a lot although, it is looking a little dated. The town council is looking for grants to make improvements and this project is the subject of one of the displays you can see around the room.

The fishing club is still very busy and the trust is adding some extra parking closer to the lake.

Park Run is brilliantly supported on Saturday mornings - thank you to all the organisers who make the event so successful.

Over the coming year the trust hopes to have a wild flower area on the banks of the trust adjacent to the A48. The trust is seeking quotes to have paths resurfaced and extra lighting for people walking from the station at night. We are also investigating a coffee shop or mobile wagon to go by the lake.

We also investigating the possibility of a pump track to be built east of station road on flooded land not used at all. We also believe that maintenance by the trust needs to improve i.e., weeds, damaged paths and bridges. We will continue to seek ways of combating floods and improving playing services for the sports clubs. Thank you to all the sports clubs and all the residence who actively use the Recreational Trust for leisure activities.

**Richard Kemsley**

Trust Chair

# The Coffee House at Bathurst Park



The season for 2022 has started well with fairly good weather, this season we have opened the coffee House inside for all customers, following the Covid Pandemic.

We opened on Saturday the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April, and have been as usual supported by the local community,

Our season started off with The Coffee House offering luxury hot chocolates which included the Easter specials, such as Black cherry, and Toffee Crunch, these are a great success so we will continue inventing new ideas to tempt the customers, we also offer freshly ground coffee, homemade cakes made by Springdale produce of Monmouth, milkshakes made with our Marshfield ice cream straight from the farm, plus smoothies, sandwiches, and toasties.

There are lots of events planned throughout the season, starting with the Easter Egg hunt planed for 13<sup>th</sup> April, The Coffee House is doing a Free raffle draw, so all children that come to the event get entered and three children can win a Easter egg.

We have a varied menu offering different selections of food and drinks.

The Park is looking beautiful as usual, so a big thank you to the park team,

The trust and the council have many events planned for the rest of 2022 so look out for the updates on the council website.

Thank you all for your continued support.

**June Peates**

Proprietor

## The Friends of Bathurst Pool



The last two years have been very challenging for the trustees of Bathurst Pool but despite the strict covid restrictions we have managed to provide a very safe environment for our swim club members. In 2020 swimmers were restricted to only five in the pool at any one time and we operated a booking system of one-hour slots throughout the season. It proved very successful under the circumstances and members were appreciative of our efforts to keep

everyone safe with constant cleansing of tables, providing anti-bacterial hand gel throughout the site and disinfecting the changing zones between each group of people. The shop remained closed to encourage swimmers to leave as soon as their time was up and many came and left in their swimwear.

Moving on to 2021 things had improved slightly at the beginning of the season when we were allowed ten swimmers in at one time with the same restrictions in place. The swim club operated daily between 10.00 and 12.00 and also 17.00 - 19.00 and when membership reached 250 it was closed to any new swimmers. The same will apply in 2022.

When the government lifted the restrictions in July we then opened to the public and enjoyed seven weeks of normal opening with 4,525 children and 2,685 adults through the gate.

Major renovations have taken place in the past year starting with the removal of the old liner and the installation of the new one after which the pool was filled in readiness to start welcoming swimmers. Unfortunately, there was a serious problem with the pump and it was discovered that this was caused by the breakdown of the ancient gate valve and non-return valve which were both encased in concrete. These had to be dug out from the cavern underneath the pool where they were situated, an arduous task by two of our trustees, and then all the new pipe work had to be fitted. We are indebted to local companies, and one from Manchester that came to our aid, all free of charge, who worked tirelessly to overcome the problem and after several set backs eventually got everything working.

From that point on everything was good and we had another great season at Bathurst Pool.

**Sheila Berryman**

Trustee

## **Lydney Dial a Ride**

The principal objective of the Company is to promote the relief of the elderly, handicapped and people with disabilities, to prevent social isolation and for such other purposes for the benefit of Lydney, Coleford and Cinderford and the surrounding areas of the South Forest and in furtherance of this, to operate a transport service.

The transport service is provided by means of a fleet of 12 minibuses. The vehicles have been converted to carry wheelchair passengers and operate five days a week from 9am. to 4.30pm.

This year has continued to be a challenge. The Covid pandemic caused further closure of our Charity shops in the early part of the year and the recommendation to avoid public transport has had a devastating impact on the Dial a Ride service.

During August 2021 our completed journeys stood at only 50% of where there were in August 2019 and any return to pre pandemic levels will take a long time to recover. Many lunch clubs and day services only began to reopen during the final part of this year. However, those that are using our service report that we are a lifeline. Ensuring they can reach their medical appointments or begin to venture out with friends, once again. Social isolation has increased dramatically during the pandemic and it is important that we are there for when passengers feel confident to get out and about.

We will continue with our cleaning regimes for our vehicles and despite the mandatory use of masks being dropped our drivers will continue to wear them when passengers are on board. It is imperative that we continue to build confidence in our service.

The next twelve months will continue with the progress made so far. We will build on the momentum of people returning to public transport. We are liaising closely with local lunch clubs and day services as they increase their usage, we are able to provide transport for people to access those amenities. We are also seeing an increase in demand for our door-to-door volunteer car service. This service takes people to their medical appointments to the two major hospitals in Gloucestershire and beyond the border. We are looking for additional volunteer car drivers to help us keep up with that demand. Additionally, we are also recruiting for new Trustees for the Charity to help us navigate through the next phase.

We thank those who have helped us over the past twelve months. Gloucestershire County Council for its grant and also the Forest of Dean District Council with its Covid Recovery Fund. We will be looking for ongoing support from parish, town and above to ensure we can continue to offer a service that allows people to remain active within their local communities.

**Louise Currie**

Manager, Lydney Dial a Ride



We continue to support Lydney Hospital with its excellent work in serving the local community. It has been a difficult year for the NHS but Lydney MIU has continued to cover the whole of the Forest area from 8:00AM to 7:30PM seven days a week.

The inpatient wards remain very busy with mainly transfers from the acute trust hospitals and Outpatient appointments are gradually getting back to normal.

We continue to press for some clarity on the replacement of services in the South Forest and during the covid period have held many meetings. Most of these have been online but after major pressure from us, an externally facilitated event was held virtually in July to consult with the local community – unfortunately the recordings of this meeting were mislaid by the facilitator and we still have not heard the conclusions!

We are increasingly hopeful that there will be a new comprehensive **Medical Hub** in the Lydney area which will be managed by G DOC; this is the GP Provider Company for Gloucestershire. Formed in 2012, G DOC is a membership organisation and all GP practices in Gloucestershire are shareholders. Its aim is to strengthen general practice by delivering safe, high quality and innovative primary care.



The Friends have also given small amounts of monies to benefit the nurses and together with a donation from Friends of Scarr Bandstand contributed towards an evening of entertainment for the nursing staff held at Beechenhurst in September.



The Friends have recently purchased several new pieces of equipment including a Hi Lo Bed and a Boston Waterfall Reclining Chair.



They also presented long serving members of staff with retirement gifts:

The Trustees have appointed Anthony Midgley as a new Trustee. Tony was a former Chairman and long-standing committee member of the Friends; he replaces Brian James who sadly passed away last year.

We also welcome Brian Pearman onto our Committee whose knowledge of the local community will be a great asset. We were sad to say goodbye to Marie Fraser Griffiths who has moved away to live nearer her daughter. Marie was our Press Officer and a great ambassador for the Friends, she will be sadly missed.

The Friends would like to thank all the staff and the many supporters of Lydney Hospital for their hard work and dedication throughout the year.

Mary Thurston

# Lydney Harbour

Lydney Harbour is currently undergoing a £2.1 million regeneration, funded by the Coastal Community Fund. The main project aims were to create safe, attractive transport routes into Lydney Harbour and develop the area as a recreation and tourism destination.

The District Council led project is nearing its conclusion and has seen:

## **New cafe, visitor information hub and public toilets**

The refurbishment of two historic buildings into a new Visitor Information Hub and toilets that are now open to the public along with a brand-new café operated by local business HiPS Social. The café, Hips Harbourside, serves a variety of hot and cold drinks, cakes, toasties, soup and more. The café's outdoor picnic benches give people a chance to take a break as they visit the harbour. A cardio-defibrillator and hand sanitiser units have also been installed as we expect to welcome more people to this location.

Hips Harbourside will be open 9am-3pm seven days a week (with longer seasonal hours to be announced). During the café's opening hours, the public toilets and visitor information hub will also be open to visitors.

Additional mooring points have also been installed. The site owners, the Environment Agency have funded new litter bins and safety railings as part of their Harbour investment programme (further details below).

## **Bespoke ornate railings near train station**

The installation of bespoke ornate railings to complement the Cookson Terrace and Railway Terrace listed buildings on Harbour Road.

## **Landscape planting scheme**

In line with the Landscape and Environmental Strategy for this scheme, 150 trees have been planted along the harbour corridor to increase biodiversity and the appearance of the harbour approach with distinctive trees - Himalayan birch, field maple, hawthorn.

## **Improved wayfinding and heritage interpretation (signs, information boards)**

New information boards around the harbour providing insights into the harbour's industrial heritage and natural environment.

## **Coming next:**

### **Public art trail and heritage interpretation artworks**

Artists Denman + Gould have been commissioned to develop a public art trail for Lydney Harbour. The **From the Forest to the Sea** artwork trail begins at the roundabout on the A48, continuing along the former railway line, finishing at the harbour itself at the site of coal tip number 9.

The permanent artworks will further enhance the visitor experience of the harbour and encourage visitors to arrive by car, foot and cycle. The artworks will reflect the heavy industrial heritage of the Forest of Dean and the part the harbour played in the export and transportation of materials to far off places. Contemporary silhouettes of

historical structures now lost to time will be reconstructed to allude to the rich industrial heritage of the site.

### **Community boat building scheme**

Lydney Skiff, our community boat building scheme, has been legally constituted as a Community Interest Company with an active group of directors. A suitable premises has now been found within the Lydney Harbour Estate for the construction of a 22ft St Ayles skiff (rowing boat) by members of the community with many volunteers ready to get underway. Anyone keen to learn more about this project and get involved can contact [lydneyskiff@gmail.com](mailto:lydneyskiff@gmail.com) or visit the group's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Lydneyskiff>

### **Further Improvements to harbour approaches are also planned**

As part of the project, we are partnering with Gloucestershire County Council Highways who will be leading on the installation of a new street-lit footpath along Harbour Road that runs from Lydney Train Station down to the privately-owned former Pine End Works. This will also see the resurfacing of the road itself. We will soon be able to give people a specific start date for the work, which will help to provide a welcome active travel option for walkers and cyclists to safely make their way to visit the harbour or access places of work along the harbour corridor.

### **The Environment Agency**

Working collaboratively with the Destination Lydney Harbour team, the Environment Agency have made a number of improvements at Lydney Harbour over the past 18 months. Our initial focus has been works in the interest of public safety, which has included replacement steps, fencing and signage. New waste bins have also been installed, potholes in the carpark repaired and Harbour Master's office has been upgraded. In consultation with Historic England, a section of path will be installed through the new pedestrian gates. The railings and mooring points are also being repainted. Vegetation has been removed from the south side of the inner basin to prevent further deterioration to the Scheduled Ancient Monument and works in this area of the site are ongoing. A height barrier will also be installed on the car park entrance to prevent unauthorised access to the site.

The next phase of the Agency's Lydney Harbour Programme will include the repair of the outer sea gates and stonework, and the reinstatement of the bypass sluice (to drain water from the outer basin). A business case will be developed over the next 12 months to identify any future investment, which may include improvement/upgrade to the boat moorings, but this will be based upon available funding.

### **Richard Morgan**

Regeneration Officer, Forest of Dean District Council

## Royal British Legion, Lydney Branch



As we are custodians of Remembrance we have been heavily involved in the organising and planning of our Annual service with Lydney Town Council, although our service had to be drastically reduced due to the Covid Pandemic it still honoured all the fallen from our Town and District, it was particularly poignant as on the 15<sup>th</sup> May, 2021 as it was the Centenary of when the British Legion was formed. A service and installation of two plaques was held at the War Memorial to mark the occasion.

In 2024 it will be Lydney Branch's Centenary and we are going to start our plans for this soon.

Our Standard Bearer David Rudge was chosen to parade our Standard at the Royal Festival of Remembrance and 3 Committee members also attended.

Sadly, in the last few months we have lost three stalwarts of our local branch, WW1 Vet Keith Wilks, and two from our Women's section Mrs Olive Kennedy and Mrs Ivy Cauldwall.

Our committee is going from strength to strength, there are now 12 on our committee, we are going to start training soon, with a view to opening the Support, Information and Advice Drop-in Centre, hopefully to be held once a fortnight at 3 Hill Street.

Welfare casework has been done via the telephone during the pandemic, and many local people have been helped; we sincerely hope that face to face meetings can be held again soon Covid restrictions allowing.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> April, the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Falklands Conflict, we held a service and wreath laying at the War Memorial followed by the planting of an Oak tree in Bathurst Park, then a buffet and a talk was given at 3 Hill Street.

Later this year we will be celebrating the Queen's Jubilee, we shall shortly start planning for this.

We sincerely hope that our membership increases over the coming month's and we wish to place on record our sincerest thanks to the Trustees of 3 Hill Street for allowing us to use their premises.

**Lynn Daszko**

Branch Chairman, RBL Lydney

## **Poppy Appeal Report**

The team of volunteers have worked very hard during the pandemic and this poppy year, which started in October, 2021 so far it has raised £22,700.93. and as this year's appeal finishes at the end of September 2022, we are hoping to increase this amount.

My sincerest thanks go to Tesco, Co-op, Lydney Town Council and its Councillor's, the Rev. David Gardiner and all the Cadet forces in Lydney for all their help and support.

My biggest thanks must go to the people of Lydney and District, for without your support we wouldn't have such a wonderful total to date.

### **Poppy Appeal Organiser**



## **Lydney War Memorial (Almshouses) Trust**

The Lydney War Memorial (Almshouses) Trust is the body responsible for the maintenance and administration of the Almshouses in Church Road, Lydney, next to the War Memorial. The properties are divided into two houses and four flats. The Trust meets every other month at the Naas Lane Community Centre.

In the last year, we very sadly lost our longest serving Trustee, Valerie Hobman, who passed away in March 2021. Regrettably Bill Hobman made the decision to resign as a Trustee shortly afterwards. The remaining Trustees, Simon Moore, Ruth Richardson, Walter Leach and Lynn Daszko have welcomed three new Trustees to the board; Susan Holmes, Laura-Jade Schroeder and Timothy Enbom.

At the AGM Mr Simon Moore agreed continue to act as Chair and Mr Walter Leach agreed to continue as Vice Chair. Gill Moir remains the Clerk and Administrative Officer for the Trust.

During the year one of our longest serving residents moved out – we were very sad to see her leave. After a refurbishment of the flat, we welcomed a new resident at the start of April. The Trust continues to maintain a good relationship with its residents who understand that they can contact the Trust Clerk at any time should any problems arise.

The Trust has continued to manage its finances effectively, carefully planning projects and maintenance work within ongoing income levels, with the aim of keeping a constant and modest level of reserves. We were pleased that the Quinquennial Survey, carried out in July 2021, confirmed the general good state of repair of the Almshouses. The list of points raised as a result of the survey have been prioritised and are being addressed over time in accordance with this prioritisation.

As part of their succession planning, the current board of Trustees are keen to encourage anyone who would be interested in becoming a Trustee to contact the Trust.

**Simon Moore**

Chair

## Lydney Town Hall Trust – Spring 2022

The last twelve months have seen the Hall emerge from the Covid restrictions of early 2021 to a period of increased activity of event booking in Autumn 2021 and the winter Christmas period. The 2021 highlights included the return of the Lydney Christmas lights switch on at the Town Hall and the return of many music and theatre nights at the weekends including the Annual Dance with Joe Loss Showband, tributes evenings to the Four Seasons, Fleetwood Mac, the Travelling Wilbury's, and local music acts including Alex Voysey Blues Band and Onika Venus and her Band. Also, theatre and entertainment events such as – The Glamour Girls. Forest Musical Society (Songs from the Musicals) and Mother Goose, a pop-up panto from Lemon Jelly.

Since Christmas we have had in addition to private hire for functions and community activities including a Craft Fayre, a Bee Gees tribute band and a Ukraine fundraiser featuring local bands. The evening on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2022, of music, raffle, auctions and donations raised £6,085 for the DEC Humanitarian Aid thanks to the support and generosity of Lydney businesses and many people from the local area.

Looking forward to the rest of 2022 we are in the process of signing a Service level agreement with Lydney Town Council which will involve the Hall receiving £5,000 in return for the provision of some free or low-cost hire to encourage and support the growth of music, drama and entertainment in the Lydney and the surrounding area.

Currently Hall bookings for 2022 (and 2023) are looking healthy and we hope there is something there for everyone to enjoy over the next 12 months. We will be participating in the Platinum Jubilee celebrations in June 2022. Please visit our website ([www.lydneytownhall.com](http://www.lydneytownhall.com)) to see our event line-up for 2022 and beyond. Also please contact us for private hire for functions or community activities. (bookings @lydney town hall.com 01594 843113)

The large iconic Victorian building which is Lydney Town Hall is never short of problems in terms of building maintenance and keeping up to date with our health and safety and other risk areas such as fire and security. We have spent large amounts to repair the roof, upgrade the electrics, provide fire boarding on ceilings in the stage area. We are grateful for the assistance given by the Covid grants from FoDDC and some grant assistance from Lydney Town Council. Our stock of comfortable chairs has also been increased with the help of a grant from Persimmon Homes. We will be undertaking further roof repairs and general maintenance including painting during 2022. However, our most important task will be to look to address the current energy cost crisis which will threaten our ability to remain financially viable going forward where insulation and the use of other sources of energy such as solar panels or heat pumps must be considered.

**Paul Trevatt**

Chair, Lydney Town Hall Trust

# Lydney Hub

## Chairs report to the Annual General Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2022

When the Covid-19 pandemic brought everything to a halt in 2020, no one thought that we'd still be dealing with another year of social distancing, lockdowns, and variants in 2021. Regardless of the uncertainty, I'm delighted to talk about the good work of Lydney Hub's committee members and volunteers despite the challenges.

The purpose of Lydney Hub is to create a space for innovation, creativity and positivity that supports the growth of young people and extends this encouragement to the wider community. A purpose that couldn't be more relevant than during a global pandemic. After a year of disruption to education, social and family lives, young people were among those most heavily impacted.

A new year meant a new lockdown and Lydney Youth Hub was forced to close again. However, Spring, brought with it a sense of hope as restrictions were eased and young people were able to return in groups of 15 max. Sessions were often booked up within the hour highlighting how important youth provision is now more ever as we try to navigate a new world with Covid.

Nine months on and Lydney Youth Hub has recovered to the numbers we were seeing pre-pandemic and continues to grow in popularity, with well over 40 young people attending every week.

I would like to give special thanks this year to our project manager Philippa Bagley who has volunteered many hours along with Rich Robbins, trying to coordinate the renovation of the first and second floor of Lydney Hub, which will soon be a dedicated youth space and Lydney Hub office. It has not been easy with staff shortages, price increases and shortages of construction materials, has meant building work has taken longer than we would of hoped but I am pleased to inform you that demolition has begun and a planning application has been submitted to the Forest of Dean District Council for a change of use and the erection of a rear extension to provide platform lift and staircase to make the building more accessible to all.

Moving into 2022 we are determined to complete the renovation but, as always, our purpose will be to support the growth of young people and have a positive impact on the wider community. We will be exploring how we can expand our youth provision, with potential to offer our services to other age groups and provide one to one support as well as work with other organizations such as FVAF and Young Gloucestershire to provide youth outreach.

We will also be creating a robust recruitment plan for more members and volunteers. Sustainability remains one of our core values and we want to make sure that what we are building today will continue long after us.

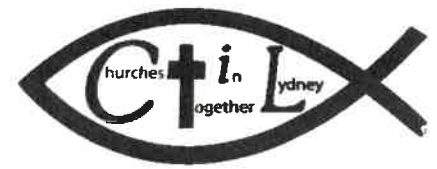
As always if you would like to join us in making Lydney a more positive place to live for everyone please put yourself forward to become a member of our committee or a youth hub volunteer. We would love to welcome you to the team.

**Emily Timmins**

Chair



# Churches Together in Lydney (CtiL) Report



Churches together in Lydney is a partnership between: Aylburton Methodist Church, Holy Trinity CE, Primrose Hill; King's Arms Community Church, Lydney; Lydney URC; Lydney Christian Fellowship; St. Mary's CE, Lydney; St Joseph's Catholic Church, Lydney; Stroat Church.

We seek to serve our local community, by reaching out and demonstrating the love of Jesus in practical ways and have taken part in events during the past year.

In September we provided children's craft activities for the Community Day in Lydney Park. It was a glorious sunny day and it was a joy to be able to gather after the lockdowns stopped such events.

Many of us from across the churches dressed up as characters from the nativity story and walked in the procession to the town hall for the 'Light up Lydney' event at the start of December, to show the true meaning of Christmas. We then distributed Christmas story books to 100 families. It was wonderful to see so many from the community lining the streets and gathering together outside.

December also brought an opportunity to celebrate Christmas with Carols at the Bandstand. FOD Brass led the carols and despite the rain a festive fun evening was had by all who came along. The free mulled wine and biscuit decorating were especially enjoyed.

This Easter we joined with Gloucestershire Community Rail Partnership and organised an Easter egg hunt on the Higher Lydney Park Estate, plus providing refreshments for this and an event on the Bluebell estate.

As Christians we pray regularly for our community, the town, businesses, schools etc. In October we held a weekend of prayer in Lydney Community Centre.

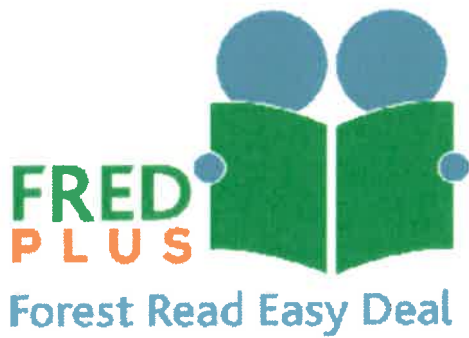
As a step of faith, we have employed a Community Family Worker and run Toddler/Baby groups in the local area. These are a source of support to those with children under the age of 5: enabling them to build relationships and for children to learn socialisation skills.

If you are in Bathurst Park on a Friday afternoon you may well see a group of little ones and grown-ups enjoying Nature Tots. We have fun discovering and exploring the world around us. We especially enjoy playing in the mud and picking daisies!

Looking ahead we are excited about the celebrations for our Queen's Platinum Jubilee. We shall provide activities for children at the day in the park on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> June, plus a Teddy Bear Trail in St Mary's church on the Friday and Saturday. There will hopefully be community singing led by one of our members on the Sunday.

We are pleased to be joined by members of the Forest of Dean Salvation Army for future events.





## **Forest Read Easy Deal**

Forest Read Easy Deal has had a busy year recovering from the impact of Covid-19 on the reading coaching it offers free of charge and on a one-to-one basis for adults.

The pandemic limited what could be offered during the lock downs and almost completely suppressed applications from learners. FRED has adapted by offering remote learning and there is now a steady increase in referrals.

FRED has been grateful for community support in Lydney particularly from Hips Cafe and the Town Council in the provision of learning venues for reading pairs to meet.

FRED had benefitted from a GCC build back grant this year and had a meeting looking at maximising future use of the Community Centre by coaches and as a venue.

FRED continues to make every effort to contact people who have difficulty reading, who for a variety of reasons live with difficulty reading, when modern learning methods can make a huge difference. If you know anyone who would benefit, please encourage them to contact us on: 07787 628923, email [info@forestreadeasydeal.org.uk](mailto:info@forestreadeasydeal.org.uk)

## **Lydney & District Twinning Association**

The Lydney and District Twinning Association started meeting again at our AGM in October 2021. This followed almost two years of inactivity since the start of the Covid Pandemic.

The visit of the Brehal delegation to Lydney planned for May 2020 needed to be cancelled along with the plans for the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration of the twinning between the two towns. The 2021 visit to Brehal was also cancelled, although communication between the Chairs of both associations has been maintained throughout.

I am pleased to announce that plans have been made for a delegation from Brehal to visit Lydney in 2022, staying with host families between 26<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> May, with a celebration dinner scheduled to take place at Speech House.

The Twinning Association held a successful fund-raising quiz in March 2022 and a further fund-raising BBQ event has been planned for June.

The Association has experienced a decline in membership over the past two years (the Lockdown situation being a major factor), although a core of 14 active and enthusiastic members remains. This remains an excellent opportunity for people to forge cultural links and friendships with individuals and families that are based in a wonderful part of Normandy in France and we are always on the lookout for new members to join our ranks. Contact details can be found via the Assistant Town Clerk.

**Andrew Dean**

Chairman

Lydney & District Twinning Association

Last year was LCC 's tenth which unfortunately was still dominated by the Covid pandemic, and fogging, sanitisers, face masks and social distancing were the order of the day. Fortunately, it allowed the redecoration programme of the centre to continue to be undertaken, and the installation of a new gas boiler and radiator thermostats to be installed thanks to generous grants from Enover and Lydney Town Council. Progress on the new store room has progressed slowly though and currently the LCC architect is trying to obtain builders quotations.

Youth Activities on Wednesday's evenings have not resumed since the lockdown and the development of "The Hub" as an alternative youth activities venue. The introduction of Kick Boxing, Dance classes (Ballet, Tap and Modern) by commercial tutors do provide youth activities at the centre! In addition, there are several groups for Parents/Carers and their preschool children, including Mothers in Mind/Baby and Me, Baby Sing and Sign, FOD Baby Sling Library, Content Calm Cubs, Soccer Tots and Parent and Baby Group.

There are many classes to help the community keep fit and active too, including Yoga, Tai Chi, Fitsteps, Jump, Zumba, Active Balance and Stretch and Tone.

For those who love crafting, there are now 3 weekly art classes, a quilting group and of course WI who meet monthly and have their own craft group, book club, scrabble and walking group. Adult Education regularly run craft, cookery, upcycling and other classes.

For spiritual guidance, there is a Community Church, Muslim Prayer Group and Gospel readings.

Birthday parties too are popular on Saturday afternoons, but we have also had baby showers, anniversary parties, and other celebratory events.

Our main fundraising events a couple of times a year, are our table quizzes, which include food prepared by Linda and Sue, and the question team of Andy and Chris.

The weekly Computer drop-in sessions by Pat & Martin remain very popular and a great help to the baffled elderly in this electronic age.

The Monday Club team of Linda, Nancy & Sue now have singing sessions on a Thursday as well as Monday's dominoes. Both sessions of these friendly drop-in sessions are very popular and combat loneliness and isolation.

Thanks to Lydney Town Council's Service Level Agreement, the Memory Café team managed by Crossroads will continue to provide help to dementia sufferers and their carers at monthly sessions, and now offer weekly help and lunch at their Azalea club which commenced in March 2022. Volunteers from Charlie's Cancer Support Group will continue to provide support and therapy treatment for all those currently suffering from cancer or who have had cancer, in the community at a local level.

Our diary is the fullest it has ever been and anyone can view it online by logging into

<https://v2.hallmaster.co.uk/Scheduler> or we can be contacted on 07504 565153. For bookings email [lydneycommunitycentre@outlook.com](mailto:lydneycommunitycentre@outlook.com)

More information about the classes, or our room sizes including photos, can be found on our website [www.lydneycommunitycentre.co.uk](http://www.lydneycommunitycentre.co.uk)



# THE VICTORIA CENTRE

Victoria Rd, Lydney, GL155DG

Tel.: 01594 843418

Email: [vclydney@gmail.com](mailto:vclydney@gmail.com)

## **Annual General Meeting – Monday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

**As we start to see some normality return following all the Covid restrictions it has proved to be a challenging time for many organisations. From lockdown in March 2020 Carol (our Co-ordinator) and several volunteers help to provide a support service for many of our diners. They carried out many tasks including shopping, collecting prescriptions, keeping phone contact and a chat from the garden gate whenever possible. Gardening was done, window cleaning, contact with relatives and friends and in one case after a plea on Facebook Carol managed to get a brand new bed and mattress for a diner that didn't have a bed to sleep on, the people who so generously provided the bed also brought with them new sheets, duvets and a weeks shopping so generous and heart warming.**

**Many of the diners do not have families locally and in one instance a lady, whose son had sadly passed away, was unable to attend his funeral, when restrictions eased a little Carol arranged a short personal blessing at St Mary's Church so that the lady could say her goodbyes.**

**With restrictions starting to ease we finally opened our doors again on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021 with all the safeguarding measures in place, we had secured grants to purchase sanitisers and a fogging machine to ensure that we could make the Centre as safe as possible. Carol obtained test kits and demonstrated to all the volunteers and diners the use of them and the importance of continuing to test regularly. We are pleased to report that of the diners that contracted Covid not one of the cases was caught at the Centre, we are pleased with our track record and long may it continue.**

**Numbers were restricted when we initially opened to allow for the necessary distancing, some people had reservations about returning and sadly in the 18 months of closure some members had passed away and some moved into residential care. A very successful Christmas day lunch was arranged with a local duo offering to provide free music on the day. Difficult times have shown amazing generosity we have received many donations to help with the reopening and have been very fortunate to secure 8 very generous grants, which have and continue to help the Centre going forward.**

**The Centre provides a place to meet, enjoy a freshly cooked meal and to have interaction with people after so many months of isolation for people.**

**This year we are having a coffee morning once a month on a Friday, will celebrate the Queen's jubilee and plan for other events during the year which we hope will be very successful.**

**I would like to thank Carol and all the dedicated volunteers who make the successful running of the Centre possible and also to thank all of the Trustees for the hard work during difficult times.**

**Glynis Halling  
Vice Chairman**



**Registered Charity number 272726**



Town Clerk: Mr S Holley



Assistant Clerk: Mrs L Bendall

# Lydney Town Council

[www.lydneytowncouncil.co.uk](http://www.lydneytowncouncil.co.uk)

## CONTACT DETAILS

### Contact Details

Telephone: **01594 842234**

Address: **Lydney Town Council  
Council Chambers  
Claremont House  
High Street  
Lydney, Glos, GL15 5DX**

### Customer Information Point/Opening Times:

**9.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.**

**Monday to Thursday**

**9.00 a.m. to 12 Noon Friday**



***'WHY NOT HIRE THE CHAMBER'***