



CARDIGAN TOWN COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT

CIVIC YEAR 2023-24

Introduction

Nestled along the stunning coastline of Ceredigion, Cardigan is a charming and vibrant town that offers a perfect blend of natural beauty, history and Welsh culture. It is the gateway to the Teifi Valley and the Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire Coastal Paths. It is positioned on the tidal reach of the River Teifi and the second largest town in Ceredigion.

The town's development revolves around the Norman castle, built in the late 11th or early 12th century. In 1176, Cardigan hosted the eisteddfod, a precursor to the present-day National Eisteddfod. During the 18th century, Cardigan thrived as an important port, but its decline began in the early 20th century due to its shallow harbour. The castle underwent restoration in 2014 and is now a hub for concerts, weddings and other events in the centre of town with its own 1176 restaurant and Bed and Breakfast amenities.

Local creators and innovators are reinventing the town, as other High Streets falter, Cardigan forges ahead. There is a quiet energy, fuelled by the town's most important resource – its people. Some are recent arrivals, some from families here for centuries. We are all doers. We have been known to be called the coolest town in Wales, but to us the residents, we just call it home.

Cardigan Town Council serves the area of Cardigan and its population of around 4,300 residents, 3,325 on the electorate. It has 14 councillors, covering the Mwldan (6 councillors), Rhyd-y-Fuwch (4 councillors) and Teifi (4 councillors) wards of Cardigan.

The Town Councillors during the 2023/24 period were:

Siân Maehrlein (Mayor)	John Adams-Lewis
Olwen Davies (Deputy Mayor)	David Maehrlein
Clive Davies	Catrin Miles
Elaine Evans	Nicholas Bolton
Trystan Phillips	Stephen Greenhalgh
Teresa Harries	Richard Jones
Philippa Noble	Richard Davies

The Town Council employs one part time member of staff – Clerk of the Town, Eleri Maskell. They also employ Richard Davies (since January 2024), a handy man on a self-employed basis.

Note from the Clerk.

I have been in this part time post now since April 2020. Under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 Cardigan Town Council have met the criteria to adopt the general power of competence (GPC) and we operate utilising this power. The position I hold is diverse and interesting. I am also the responsible financial officer for the council. I enjoy working with the councillors and communicating with the residents.

Cardigan Town Council is responsible for:

- King George V fields and surrounding play areas;
- Cardigan Skatepark;
- Pentop play area;
- Christmas lights;
- Benches and street furniture;
- Hanging baskets and floral displays;
- Providing financial grants and other support for local organisations and good causes;
- Road closures for annual town centre events;
- The street market element of Cardigan Town Fair;
- Supporting the unitary council – Ceredigion County Council in the maintenance of the green areas in our town;

Cardigan Town Council Objectives

To provide a good service and value for money of the people of Cardigan by enhancing well-being throughout the Town.

To continue to develop a strategy and action plan for the period of 2022-2027 (an initial annual plan was adopted in December 2021).

To create an engagement and consultation strategy to enable the councillors and clerk to engage widely with the diverse communities of Cardigan, both the younger and older generations, and identify priorities from that engagement and public consultation.

To create a “Digital Place Plan” for Cardigan Town and continue to lead the way with new technologies such as the “Internet of Things.”

To re-open the toilets in Chancery Lane under the responsibility of the Town Council re-instating a vital service to bring visitors to the town centre, this remains to be a work in progress.

To support the county council services to maintain the appearance and upkeep of the town centre to a high standard.

To continue to work closely with neighbouring and other town and community councils.

Financial Summary

The Council Precept is the main source of Council income and represents the amount of council tax paid by households in Cardigan that is allocated to the Town Council. The annual precept for 2023-24 was £85,735.05 for the seventh successive year. The band D property council tax rate equates to £46.33 per household. Other income received in this year is £1,050 in rent from both the Bowling club and Rugby Club. A full income and expenditure report can be found on our website. The council retains reserves of approximately £40,000 to deal with unforeseen contingencies and emergencies.

Grant Awards

A total of £10,814 went to charities and good causes in the town last year. Beneficiaries included Wales Air Ambulance Service, Cardigan Classic Car Club, Clarby Warriors Pan Disability Football Squad, Cardigan Rowing Club, Barley Saturday, Gwyl Fawr Aberteifi, Cardigan River and Food Festival, Small World Theatre, St Dogmaels Junior Football Club, The Aloud Charity and Ysgol Uwchradd Aberteifi.

A personal note from the Mayor at the end of her civic reign.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has supported me during the past year, the members of the Council, the Clerk, and family and friends, but especially to my husband and consort David for his constant support. I have thoroughly enjoyed my year in office and appreciate every kind invitation extended to us over the past year.

The chosen charity for my year in office is Cardigan Cancer Care. A charity very close to my heart for the help and support given to me when I lost my beloved daughter Kelly to cancer just before my year in office began. Kelly was very supportive and enthusiastic encouraging me to stand as the Mayor, therefore it is in her memory that I gift the sum of £1000 solely to Cardigan Cancer Care for the fantastic work they do in the community when people are enduring the darkest hours of their lives.

It has been a busy year juggling my work, role as County Councillor and Mayor, but it has been extremely fulfilling. I look forward to carrying on my civic duties as a town councillor and wish the town and its residents a prosperous future.

Thank you very much.

Councillor Siân Maehrlein.

Mayor's donations throughout 2023/2024:

Cardigan Agricultural Show	£50
Henllan (Maldwyn Lewis)	£20
Christmas Chocolates	£30
St Mary's Church Christmas service	£20

St Dogmaels RNLI Christmas service	£20
Cardigan Junior School PTFA	£20
Mount Zion Church	£20
Wales Air Ambulance	£120
Jig-So Charity	£90
Parkinsons Society	£90
Mencap Society	£70
Women's Aid	£70