



CARDIGAN TOWN COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT

CIVIC YEAR 2024-25

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 2024/25 period were:

John Adams-Lewis

Nicholas Bolton

Mark Cole (Elected to Town Council March 2025)

Clive Davies

Olwen Davies (Mayor)

Richard Davies

Elaine Evans

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor – stood down as a Councillor December 2024)

Teresa Harries

Richard Jones

David Maehrlein

Siân Maehrlein

Catrin Miles

Philippa Noble

Trystan Phillips

The Town Council employs one part time member of staff – Clerk of the Town and Responsible Financial Officer, 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. The role has grown extensively over the years, therefore the hours for the Clerk have increased to 30 per week to meet the demands of the job in the next new financial year. 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 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 for 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.”

There is an increased exchange of responsibilities currently in process between smaller town and community councils and unitary councils. Cardigan town councillors have over the past year committed to leasing all public conveniences in the town to enable them to remain open, although the leases are not yet complete, we hope to receive them during 2025/26. This has been subject to intense discussion during 2024/25. Councillors have also committed to maintaining green areas in Cardigan and supporting unitary councils with general upkeep and maintenance to priorities the appearance of our town 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 2024-25 was £90,022.00. The band D property council tax rate equates to £48.65 per household. Other income received in this year is £1,050 in rent from both the Bowling club and Rugby Club. A grant of £6,956.12 was obtained through Cynnal y Cardi, Ceredigion County Council under the UK Shared Prosperity Fund supported by the UK Government. This enabled the town council to purchase road closure equipment and training courses to allow the Clerk to apply for road closures on behalf of local organisations and events run by the council. The council were also extremely fortunate to benefit from a Lawn Tennis Wales Association grant to refurbish the Town Council tennis courts. The asset will be managed by Tennis Lawn Wales and benefit from expertise to fully maximise the use of this facility in the town centre. £35,821.47 was obtained in total, with the VAT element of the invoices being reclaimed in 2025. A full income and expenditure report can be found on our website.

Grant Awards

A total of £12,920 went to charities and good causes in the town last year. Beneficiaries included Wales Air Ambulance Service, Bendith, Cardigan Castle, Cardigan Classic Car Club, Cardigan Football Club, Cardigan Rowing Club, Barley Saturday, St Marys Church, Gwyl Fawr Aberteifi, Cardigan River and Food Festival, Poppit Sands Surf Lifesaving Club, Small World Theatre, St Dogmaels Junior Football Club and Theatre Mwldan.

A personal note from the Mayor.

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 niece and consort Ffion Davies, for her support and company. I have thoroughly enjoyed my year in office and appreciate every kind invitation extended to us over the past year.

My first event as Mayor was the Installation Ceremony. It was lovely to be surrounded by my family, friends and fellow councillors as well as dignitaries from neighbouring councils. We had an opportunity to socialise after the service enjoying tea and Bara Brith which I supplied for the occasion.

A stand out memory for the year was a visit to Brioude our twin town. We attended a long weekend of festivities, highlighting local produce including cheese, wine and lace. The welcome received from Brioude Town was overwhelming.

It was a pleasure to be the Mayor when the Craft Festival Wales came to Cardigan Castle for the first time. The high quality of the crafts on display was outstanding. It was a pleasure to attend the event on all three days.

Another highlight event is the Other Voices Festival; it was extremely enjoyable to attend this event for the whole weekend and be witness to the crowds drawn into the town to celebrate a wide array of music culture from far and wide.

We welcomed our new Reverend Wyn Maskell at the end of 2024, he has proven to be an asset to the town and has embraced his role fully at St Marys Church.

The night before opening Cardigan Fair it was a pleasure to witness the pure joy on our special needs members of society. Rides were free, kindly donated for by Vernon Stud.

The Mayor Making Ceremony for the Barony of Cemaes is a traditional event embracing all the historic pomp, and has only survived in Newport, Pembrokeshire and London in these modern times. It truly was an eye opening experience.

The Festival of Light was established in Cardigan during my year in office, culminating in a spectacular Lantern Parade, despite the change in date, and bad weather. Cardigan was adorned by beautiful lanterns, a feast for the eyes during the dark winter nights.

It was heart warming to have the pleasure to deliver 30 Christmas lunches for our less able members of society. To deliver such a feast on Christmas Day was a reminder of how difficult and lonely the festive time of year can be for some people. Truly a humbling occasion.

Another key point was the reopening of the Cardigan Market Hall, it is now a vibrant hub of local tradespeople and it is lovely to see the market hall back to its original splendour with the added new amenities.

My year in office drew to a close with our traditional spectator event Barley Saturday. This year we were honoured to be joined by Eluned Morgan, the First Minister. Our town is so proud of this unique event, long may it continue to be an annual date for our town.

Throughout the year I have played a key role establishing a new Flood Plan for the residents close to the river. Also, a litter picking Hub and Facebook page have been created to encourage councillors, business and residents to take pride in their town and practical steps in cleaning the streets. A project which remains to be ongoing is the creation of a community garden at Rhos y Dre, utilising a waste piece of land to be enjoyed by residents.

Due to unique circumstances, I have the pleasure of continuing in the role of Mayor for another year. So these projects can be developed and culminate in my next civic year. Hopefully, the experiences of my first year will be out done by the second due to having a practise run at it!

Thank you very much.

Cllr Olwen Davies

The Mayor.

Mayor's donations and expenses throughout 2024/2025:

Mayor Installation Ceremony refreshments	£50
Brioude Gifts	£50
Mencap Coffee Morning	£20
Patagonia Twinning Committee Coffee Morning	£20
Tractor Racing, Sioe y Cardis	£20
Gwyl Fawr Eisteddfod	£50
Cardigan Agricultural Show	£150
Cardigan Carnival Raffle	£10
Craft Festival Wales ticket	£20
Ysgol Gynradd Aberteifi Coffee Morning	£20
Bara brith for Ysgol Gynradd Aberteifi Coffee Monring	£20
Mayors Charity Run	£20
Barely Saturday Committee	£250
Santas Grotto	£200
RNLI Carol Service	£20
St Marys Church Carol Service	£20
Christmas Tractor Run Penparc YFC	£20
Parkinsons Support Group	£50
Emergency Services Christmas Hampers x 4	£150
Brioude Twinning Committee Coffee Morning	£20
Cardigan Cancer Care Coffee Morning arranged by Teresa Harries	£20

