

Cyngor Tref **Y Fenni**
Abergavenny Town Council

ANNUAL REPORT 2023 - 24





Welcome from the Mayor 2023-24

Dear Resident, One of my most memorable experiences during the past year, while serving Abergavenny as mayor, was the Community Awards night on 25th April 2024. On this special evening, many residents, both current and former, were honoured for their contributions - whether it was establishing local charities, supporting veterans, motivating traders, volunteering at the Foodbank, or assisting at the market.

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Yet, there were so many more who could have been recognised, both in the room and beyond. We also heard from the organisers of my chosen charities - Town of Sanctuary, Andy's Man Club, and Abergavenny Community Enterprise - all of which focus on supporting those on the margins. It was a powerful reminder of the incredible volunteer spirit in Abergavenny. To all of you who work to make our town a better place, I extend my heartfelt thanks on behalf of the Town Council.

As someone who is relatively new to Abergavenny, my year as mayor opened my eyes to the remarkable talent within this community - whether in the arts, music, craft, sports, or theatre. A particular highlight was Abergavenny's participation in the Britain in Bloom awards, where we won gold in our category and, even more impressively, the overall award for sustainable planting.

As a Town Council, we hosted events such as the Remembrance Parade, the Christmas light switch-on, VE Day celebrations, and introduced picnics in the park. I was also privileged to open the first Greener Abergavenny event. After a pause due to Covid, we re-engaged with our twin town of Beaupreau, France, and I made two self-funded trips there to represent the council. Hopefully, you've been able to catch some of these moments

on our revitalised social media channels. Looking ahead, the Council is actively working on its Strategy and Action Plan, which includes placemaking efforts for the town centre. We welcome public participation in our meetings - whether in person or online - and encourage residents to raise any concerns during the public session at the start. Our aim remains to work with and for all the people of Abergavenny.



Councillor Anne Wilde
Mayor of Abergavenny 2022-23



About this Report

In this report, we outline Abergavenny Town Council's goals for 2023-24 and highlight the key achievements over the past year. You'll also find a snapshot of our services and how to get in touch with us.

About Abergavenny Town Council

Abergavenny Town Council serves as the local governing body for Abergavenny, representing the community with 17 councillors across 6 wards. You can find details of all councillors, wards, and much more on our newly updated Town Council website:

www.abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk

The website also provides information on council meetings, councillor attendance, allowances paid, grant guidance, application forms, and details of events happening across Abergavenny.

We encourage residents to attend council meetings, either in person or remotely via hybrid meetings. During these sessions, you have the opportunity to voice your thoughts during the public session at the beginning of each meeting. Meetings are now held in the Community Room at the Town Hall. For more information on how to attend, either in person or virtually, please contact the Principal Officer.

The Town Council meets regularly throughout the year: Full Council bi-monthly, People and Communities Committee bi-monthly, and Policy and Resources Committee and Environment Committee monthly. Since the introduction of changes in the Local Government Act in May 2022, the Town Council has taken on additional responsibilities, such as producing an Annual Report, creating a Training Programme for councillors, and developing a self-assessment template for council performance. We are pleased to announce that the 2023/2024 Annual Report marks our fifth consecutive report.

Each year, during the Annual Meeting in May, councillors elect the Mayor and Deputy Mayor. For 2023/2024, Councillor Anne Wilde has been appointed as Mayor, and Councillor Ben Callard

as Deputy Mayor. Both Anne and Ben have already made their mark on the council, with Anne focusing on enhancing accessibility and inclusivity for all in the town, and Ben supporting new initiatives that benefit local communities. In addition, Anne Wilde has selected three charities to support during her term as Mayor: Abergavenny Town of Sanctuary, Abergavenny Community Enterprise, and Abergavenny's Andy's Man Club. These organisations reflect her commitment to supporting local causes that uplift and strengthen the community.



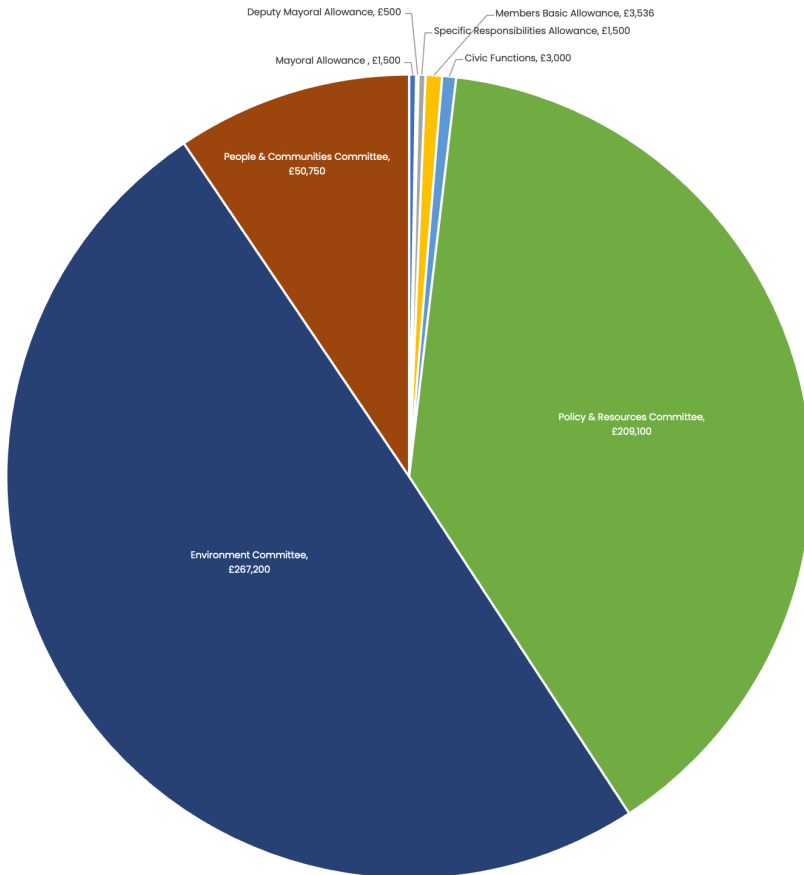
The council's funding primarily comes from the precept, an additional charge added to Council Tax bills based on projected council expenditure. For the financial year 2023/2024, the precept was set at £537,086.

In addition, our Town Team - comprised of three staff members employed via Monmouthshire County Council's Grounds Department - continues to maintain and care for the town's wards, ensuring that public areas are clean and well-maintained, with their remit covering everything from litter bins to general street maintenance.



Abergavenny Town Council

2023-24



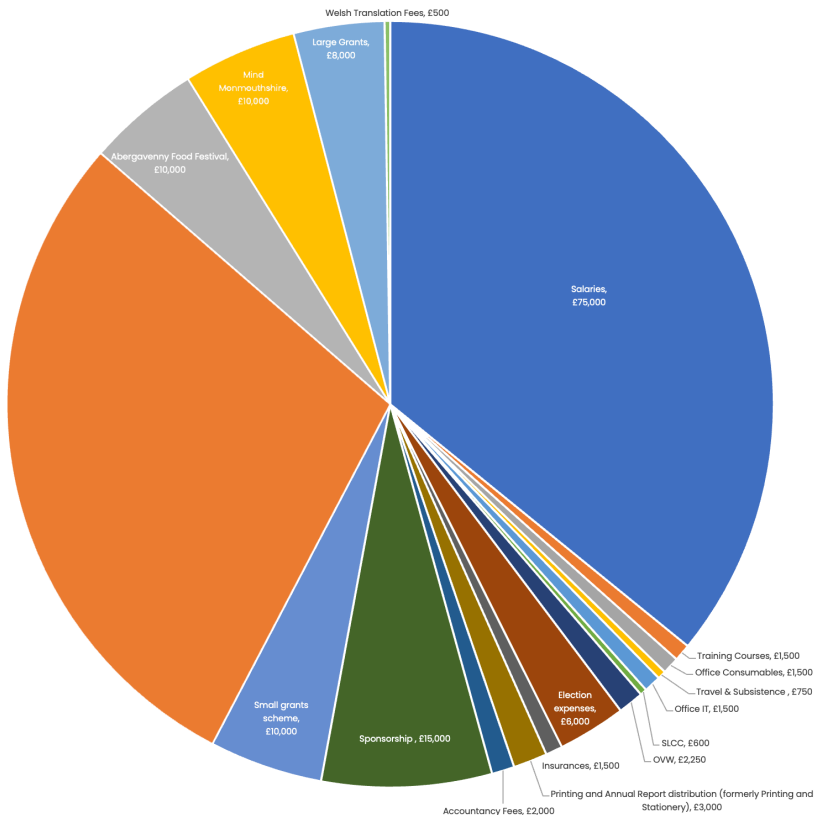
Deputy Mayoral Allowance	£500
Mayoral Allowance	£1,500
Members Basic Allowance	£3,536
Specific Responsibilities Allowance	£1,500

Civic Functions	£3,000
People & Communities Committee	£50,750
Policy & Resources Committee	£209,100
Environment Committee	£267,200



Policy and Resources Committee

2023-24



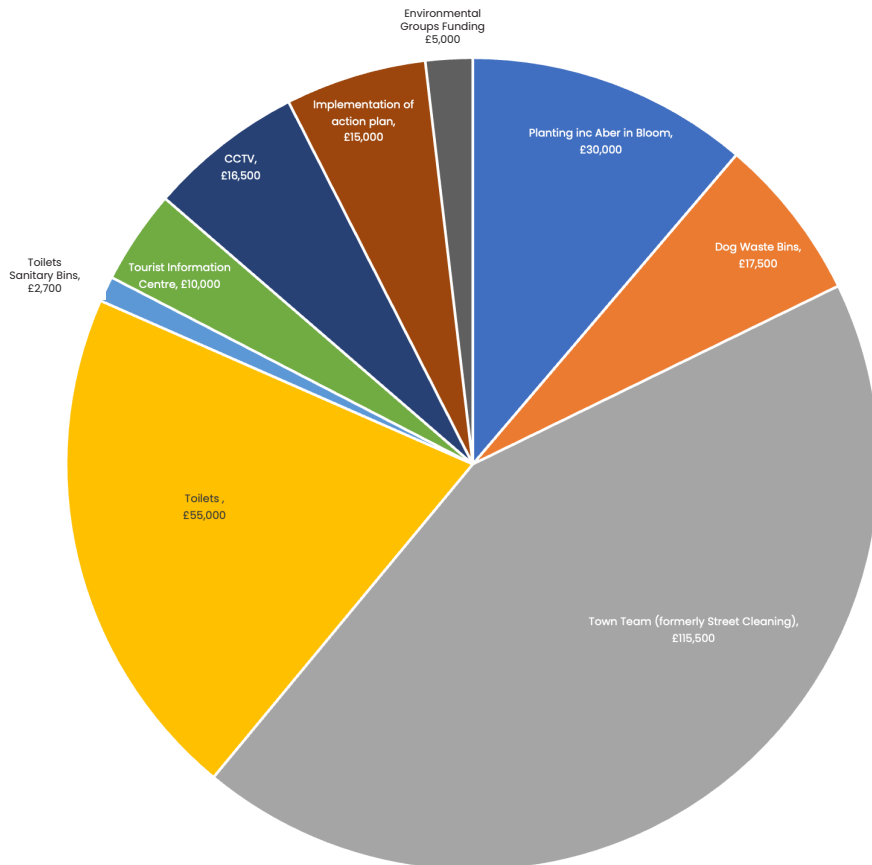
Printing and Annual Report	£3,000
Accountancy Fees	£2,000
Sponsorship	£15,000
Small Grants Scheme	£10,000
Funding Agreements	£60,000
Abergavenny Food Festival	£10,000
Mind Monmouthshire	£10,000
Large Grants	£8,000
Welsh Translation Fees	£500

Salaries	£75,000
Training Courses	£1,500
Office Consumables	£1,500
Travel & Subsistence	£750
Office IT	£1,500
SLCC	£600
OVW	£2,250
Election Expenses	£6,000
Insurances	£1,500



Environment Committee

2023-24



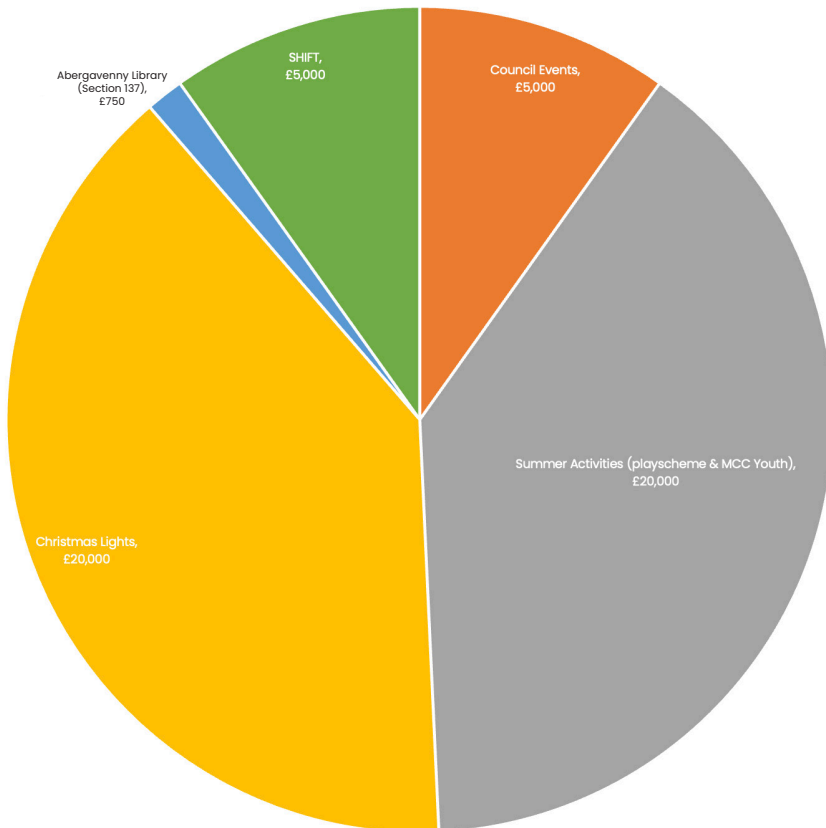
Planting inc Aber in Bloom	£30,000
Dog Waste Bins	£17,500
Town Team	£115,500
Toilets	£55,000
Toilets Sanitary Bin	£2,700

CCTV	£16,500
Tourist Information Centre	£10,000
Implementation of Action Plan	£15,000
Environmental Groups Funding	£5,000



People & Communities Committee

2023-24



Abergavenny Library	£750
SHIFT	£5,000
Christmas Lights	£20,000

Twinning	£0
Summer Activities	£20,000
Council Events	£5,000



Abergavenny Town Council Strategy & Action Plan

This is based on the priorities outlined in the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. This is a featured agenda item for all committees and is updated regularly.

New projects are included in the plan, and those that have been completed are updated accordingly with all plans being monitored. This Action Plan can be found on the Town Council's website www.abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk or by contacting the Principal Officer to request a copy. Here we set out how we've performed against the plan.

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In 2023 and 2024, Abergavenny Town Council made remarkable strides toward fulfilling the promises set out in our action plan. Guided by our vision for a sustainable, inclusive, and prosperous community, we championed initiatives across environmental stewardship, community cohesion, economic prosperity, equality, and well-being.

From nurturing biodiversity in our thriving Community Orchard to earning prestigious sustainability awards, fostering inclusive events like Abergavenny Pride, and supporting mental health initiatives, we've demonstrated our dedication to creating a resilient and connected town. Through collaborative partnerships, volunteer efforts, and innovative projects, we continue to build a future that reflects the needs and aspirations of our community.

This report highlights the key accomplishments that embody our shared commitment to a better Abergavenny, one that thrives socially, economically, and environmentally, with opportunity and accessibility for all.



Section 6: Environment Act



Community Orchard:

The Abergavenny Community Orchard continues to thrive as a hub of biodiversity and sustainability. In 2023/24, it retained its Green Flag status and hosted engaging community events such as the Wassail celebration, grafting workshops, and an apple-juicing day. Volunteers further enhanced biodiversity through hedge-laying, meadow management, and a citizen science project to monitor pollinator biodiversity.

In collaboration with Abergavenny Town Council and MCC Green Infrastructure, volunteers of all ages received training through the FIT Pollinator programme, leading to the discovery of rare species, including orchids, black oil beetles, and bees such as *Anthophora plumipes* and *Osmia bicornis*. Looking ahead, the orchard aims to equip the community, especially young people with skills in sustainable food production, fostering a deeper connection to nature.



Sustainability Award: A Commitment to a Greener Future:

Abergavenny Town Council proudly won the 2023 Britain in Bloom Sustainable Gardening Award, showcasing our dedication to sustainability. Key projects included the introduction of smart soil moisture sensors, reducing water waste and emissions, and the goal of achieving Water Neutrality by 2030.

Community involvement played a vital role, with local groups like Friends of Bailey Park and Abergavenny Community Orchard contributing to zero-waste initiatives and the Citizen Science F.I.T. Project, which uncovered rare pollinator species. Together, we're setting a benchmark for environmental stewardship and inspiring change.

A Wales of Cohesive Communities



Greater Gwent Goes Wild:

Abergavenny Town Council was delighted to be part of Greater Gwent Goes Wild, a vibrant celebration held in Bailey Park. The event brought the community together to promote environmentally conscious choices and highlight the vital role of pollinators in our ecosystem. Highlights included the unveiling of a stunning floral mosaic and captivating mural, of a Peacock Butterfly. Later in 2023 the Civic Society commissioned another mural of a pollinating Bee.

With interactive workshops and educational displays, the event inspired visitors of all ages to embrace greener lifestyles and sustainable practices. Greater Gwent Goes Wild showcased the beauty of our natural world while creating a shared commitment to preserving biodiversity and building a harmonious connection between people and nature.



School Visits

Throughout the year, Abergavenny Town Council engaged with local schools to showcase its ongoing work and commitment to the community. This included delivering STEM kits to primary schools and an educational visit to Cantref Primary School, where Year 5 pupils were given an insight into the many roles of the council. Mayor Anne Wilde shared her journey into public service and introduced students to traditional civic robes and the Ceremonial Mace, helping them understand the significance of local government. Abergavenny Town Council remains committed to empowering young minds and fostering a deeper connection between the community's youth and local governance.



Greener Abergavenny

Abergavenny Town Council was proud to support the first Greener Abergavenny Fair, held at the Market Hall. The event attracted a strong turnout of residents eager to explore sustainable solutions, engage with exhibitors, and attend talks on key environmental issues. It provided a platform for the community to come together and reflect on ways to build a greener, more sustainable future for Abergavenny.

The fair featured informative talks on local rivers, sustainable food production in Monmouthshire, and the potential for solar farms, alongside screenings of thought-provoking films on sustainability. Organised by the newly formed Greener Abergavenny collective, the event aimed to raise awareness about the climate emergency, resource depletion, and biodiversity loss, while promoting practical, actionable steps toward a more sustainable community.



Abergavenny Pride

Abergavenny Pride was a standout event of the summer, reflecting the town's inclusive and welcoming culture. Abergavenny Town Council proudly supported the event with a donation of £723, helping to promote it through programmes, print, and digital media. The Council also played an active role in facilitating the painting of the road and organising the parade, ensuring the event was a success.

The celebration brought the community together, showcasing Abergavenny's commitment to diversity and equality. The Town Council's involvement highlighted its ongoing dedication to supporting local events that foster unity and inclusivity within the town.



Charity Coffee Mornings

Throughout the year, Abergavenny Town Council hosted multiple coffee mornings in support of the various charities they work with. These events brought the community together, raising funds through bake sales while also helping to raise awareness for the important causes championed by the charities.

The coffee mornings were a fantastic way to connect with residents and demonstrate the Council's ongoing commitment to supporting local and national charitable organisations. The success of these events highlights the town's generous spirit and dedication to making a positive difference.

A Resilient Wales



One Voice Wales Awards

Abergavenny Town Council was honoured to attend the prestigious One Voice Wales Awards, where their outstanding contributions to local governance and community initiatives were recognised. Led by Principal Officer Sandra Rosser, Councillor David Simcock, and Deputy Principal Officer Jay Shipley, the Council showcased their commitment to digital innovation and sustainability.

A highlight of the evening was Sandra Rosser's presentation on the best use of Digital Resources, which earned Abergavenny Town Council the top prize in this category. The Council was also commended for their Environmental Project, Sustainability initiatives, and Annual Report, reflecting their dedication to environmental stewardship, technological excellence, and transparent communication with the community.



Benthgy

Since its launch in 2022, when Cllr Gethin Jones became the first registered member, Benthgy, meaning borrow or lend in Welsh, is an innovative initiative promoting the circular economy across Monmouthshire, and the initiative has gone from strength to strength. With funding from the Welsh Government and support from Monmouthshire County Council and Abergavenny Town Council, the project has established branches in Abergavenny, Caldicot, and Monmouth. Abergavenny Town Council is proud to support Benthgy wherever possible, recognising its value in pushing forward sustainability, reducing waste, and encouraging shared community resources.



A Prosperous Wales



Abergavenny Food Festival

Abergavenny Town Council was proud to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the prestigious Abergavenny Food Festival, a key event that contributes to the town's prosperity by attracting visitors from near and far. This vibrant celebration not only showcases local produce and talent but also supports the local economy, reinforcing Abergavenny's reputation as a thriving market town.

As part of our support, the Council funded the creation of stunning decorations for the iconic Market Hall. Designed by local artist Bettina Reeves and crafted with the help of dedicated volunteers, the decorations created a memorable experience for attendees, highlighting the community's creativity and commitment to ensuring the festival's ongoing success.



ADTA (Abergavenny and District Tourist Association)

Abergavenny Town Council believes in the power of collaborative thinking to drive prosperity and strengthen the local economy. By supporting the Abergavenny and District Tourist Association (ADTA), the Council champions initiatives that showcase the town's unique character, businesses, and attractions.

Through this partnership, ADTA highlights the best Abergavenny has to offer - from independent shops and eateries to outdoor activities and celebrated festivals ensuring the town remains a key destination for visitors. Together, the Council and ADTA are working to support local businesses, boost tourism, and create a thriving and prosperous community for all.



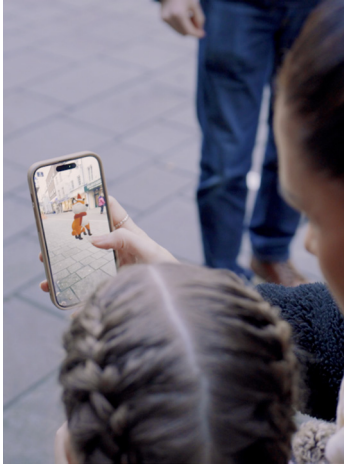
Providing Community Support

Abergavenny Town Council has actively promoted the town through its growing social media presence. By showcasing local events, independent stores, and unique activities, the Council has helped attract visitors and encourage community participation. This digital outreach not only highlights the vibrant culture of Abergavenny but also supports local businesses and organisations by amplifying their initiatives to a wider audience.

In addition to promotion, the Town Council has helped facilitate events and activities that bring people together, ensuring Abergavenny remains a welcoming and dynamic place for both residents and visitors. From bustling markets to seasonal celebrations, the Council's ongoing support has strengthened community spirit and contributed to the town's economic and cultural prosperity.



A More Equal Wales



Abergavenny Town Council is dedicated to fostering inclusivity and equality, ensuring that everyone, regardless of financial circumstances, has the opportunity to enjoy the town and its vibrant community. Throughout the year, the Council has organised and supported a range of free events, creating welcoming spaces for individuals and families from all walks of life to come together.

Notable events such as the Christmas Switch-On, the AR Trail, where families could explore the town in search of fun, festive creatures, and the annual Pride celebrations have been key in bringing the community together. Additionally, the Greener Abergavenny Fair highlighted sustainable practices and the importance of environmental stewardship. These activities not only promote equality but also provide opportunities for children and families to access enriching experiences, celebrating Abergavenny's culture and heritage. By removing financial barriers, Abergavenny Town Council continues to ensure that the town remains a welcoming and accessible place for all, where everyone can engage with and enjoy the many offerings throughout the year.

A Healthier Wales



Active Travel

Abergavenny Town Council has played a key role in facilitating ongoing consultations for active travel routes within the town, supporting the vision of a healthier Wales. By engaging with residents, community groups, and stakeholders, the Town Council has ensured that the development of walking and cycling routes is inclusive and meets the needs of the community.

Through these efforts, the Town Council is not only improving the town's infrastructure but also fostering a culture of physical activity, making it easier for residents and visitors to choose walking or cycling as sustainable and healthy travel options. The focus on active travel is part of Abergavenny's ongoing commitment to enhancing the well-being of its residents and contributing to the broader goals of a healthier, more sustainable Wales.



Mill Wheel Project

In celebration of the King's Coronation and Volunteering Day, Abergavenny Town Council supported the Mill Wheel project, a unique initiative that transformed a historic mill wheel into a thriving herb garden near the town's orchard. With the help of enthusiastic volunteers, including councillors, the project not only preserved a piece of local heritage but also promoted sustainability and healthy living within the community.

The herb garden, planted and nurtured by the community,



serves as a lasting reminder of the value of sustainable practices and the importance of locally grown produce. By facilitating this project, the Town Council has strengthened its commitment to environmental stewardship and encouraged residents and visitors to adopt healthier lifestyles, furthering its mission of promoting a healthier, more connected community.



Supporting Mental Well-Being in Abergavenny

Abergavenny Town Council recognises the importance of mental well-being and has actively supported local charities dedicated to improving mental health across the community. Throughout the year, the Council has worked to promote organisations such as Mind Monmouthshire and Andy's Man Club, which provide essential resources and safe spaces for individuals to discuss and manage their mental health.

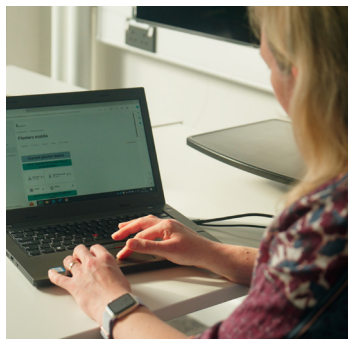
Andy's Man Club, in particular, held a special place as one of the Mayor's chosen charities for the year. This partnership underscored the Council's commitment to raising awareness and encouraging open conversations about mental health. By supporting these vital organisations through social media, community events, and fundraising efforts, the Town Council has helped ensure these services are accessible to those in need, reinforcing its dedication to fostering a compassionate and inclusive community.

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A More Responsive Town Council (A Globally Responsible Wales)

In its ongoing efforts to become a more responsive and globally responsible body, Abergavenny Town Council took significant strides towards enhancing its digital footprint and increasing community engagement. A new, user-friendly website was developed as part of a broader marketing strategy, which aimed to connect with a wider audience and provide easy access to important town information. This digital transformation has allowed the Town Council to better communicate with residents, promote local events, and streamline access to services.

The Town Council worked alongside an external marketing team, whose innovative approach blended the rich history of Abergavenny with modern digital solutions. This unique take on digitalisation not only preserved the town's heritage but also embraced sustainability by reducing the reliance on printed materials. The council's digital presence now reflects its commitment to progress, enhancing engagement with the local community while also positioning Abergavenny as a forward-thinking town, ready to embrace the challenges of the future in a globally responsible way.



Smart Town: Abergavenny Leads the Way in Sustainability

Abergavenny Town Council has made significant progress in transforming the town into a Smart Town, integrating innovative technology to enhance sustainability and improve the quality of life for its residents. With the support of Owen Davies Consulting, the Welsh Government, and Monmouthshire County Council, Abergavenny introduced soil moisture sensors in local planters and hanging baskets, addressing the challenges of dry summers while helping the town achieve a Gold Award in Britain in Bloom competition. Using LoRaWAN Gateways and smart technology extends to monitoring environmental factors such as bin levels, air quality, and parking, creating a data-driven approach to town management.



This forward-thinking approach highlights the town's commitment to a sustainable future. By reducing water waste, lowering carbon emissions, and creating greener public spaces, Abergavenny sets a powerful example of how technology can support environmental stewardship. With the potential to expand further, the Smart Town initiative underscores the town's dedication to creating a more sustainable, efficient, and connected future for all its residents.

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A summary of what we do

- Paying for emptying of litter bins and street cleaning in the town centre.
- Paying Monmouthshire County Council to keep open public toilets in the town and that the toilets in Bailey Park are open at weekends and throughout the summer holidays.
- Paying for the emptying of sanitary and nappy waste bins in the public toilets.
- Paying for the dog waste bins to be emptied weekly.
- Providing the Christmas lights in the town and arranging the 'switch on' event.
- Paying for CCTV in the town.
- Management and maintenance of all the town centre planters, hanging baskets and other floral displays around the town, and enhancing and promoting biodiversity.
- Financial support to ensure that the town has a Tourist Information Centre.
- Support local events and festivals.

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How to contact the Town Council

Contact the Principal Officer by email

clerk@abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk

or call **01873 735820**.

You can pop into the office on the first floor in the Town Hall, located opposite the entrance to the library. You can also contact our Community Engagement and Support Officer on **admin@abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk** who is available on **Tuesdays and Thursdays**.

Scan Here – to see upcoming events in Abergavenny, this page is updated frequently as we get notified of events.





Contact The Councillors



Pen y fal Ward

Cllr Anne Wilde • Labour • annewilde@abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk

Cllr Gareth Wilde • Labour • garethwilde@abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk

Cllr Maureen Powell • Conservative • maureenpowell@abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk



Lansdown Ward

Cllr Martyn Groucutt • Labour • martyngroucutt@abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk

Cllr Mary Ann Brocklesby • Labour • maryannbrocklesby@abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk

Cllr James George • Independent • jamesgeorge@abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk



Cantref Ward

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Cllr David Simcock • Labour • davidsimcock@abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk

Cllr Bryony Nicholson • Labour • bryonymicholson@abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk

Cllr Sara Burch • Labour • saraburch@abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk



Park Ward

Cllr Philip Bowyer • Labour • philipbowyer@abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk

Cllr Kyle Eldridge • Independent • kyleeldridge@abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk

Cllr Diane English • Labour • dianeenglish@abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk



Grofield Ward

Cllr Laura Wright • Labour • laurawright@abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk

Cllr Gethin Jones • Independent • gethinjones@abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk

Cllr Maurice Barnes • Labour • mauricebarnes@abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk

Cllr Ben Callard • Labour • bencallard@abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk



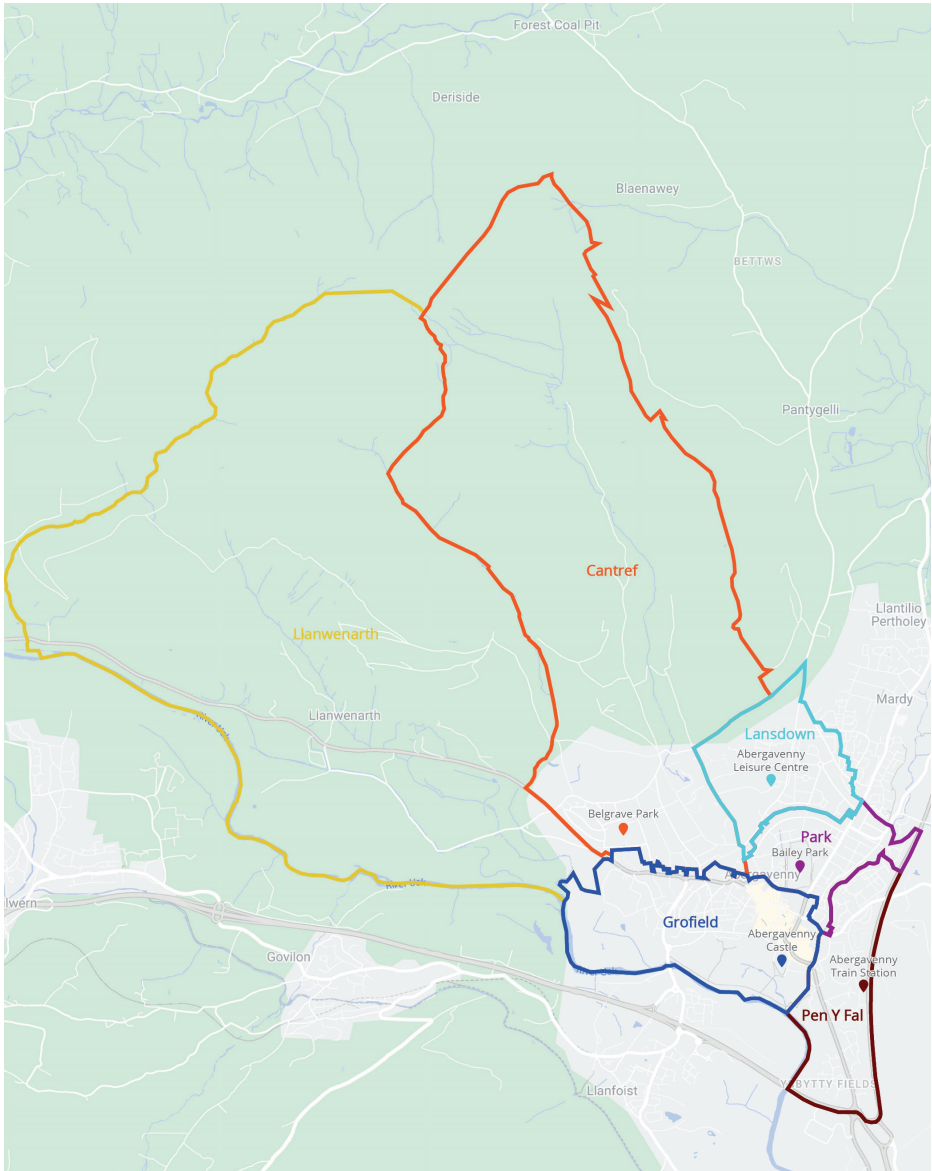
Llanwenarth Citra Ward

Cllr Chris Holland • Independent • chrisholland@abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk



Abergavenny Council Wards

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Meet The Councillors



Pen y fal Ward



Cllr Anne Wilde
Labour



Cllr Gareth Wilde
Labour



Cllr Maureen Powell
Conservative



Lansdown Ward



Cllr Martyn Groucutt
Labour



Cllr Mary Ann Brocklesby
Labour



Cllr James George
Independent



Cantref Ward

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Cllr David Simcock
Labour



Cllr Bryony Nicholson
Labour



Cllr Sara Burch
Labour



Park Ward



Cllr Philip Bowyer
Labour



Cllr Kyle Eldridge
Independent



Cllr Diane English
Labour



Grofield Ward



Cllr Laura Wright
Labour



Cllr Gethin Jones
Independent



Cllr Maurice Barnes
Labour



Cllr Ben Callard
Labour



Llanwenarth Citra Ward



Cllr Chris Holland
Independent