

Cyngor Tref Y Fenni
Abergavenny Town Council

ANNUAL REPORT

2024 – 25





Welcome from the Mayor 2024-25

As an Abergavenny boy of 75 years, it was an honour and a privilege to be voted in as Abergavenny Town Mayor by my fellow Councillors, and to be able to follow in the footsteps of previous Town Mayors, it remains an honour to serve my hometown.



Throughout the last 12 months, I have had the pleasure of attending so many functions as your Mayor.

My Charites were Sight Cymru, and Dandelion Wishes, and I was pleased to hand over cheques to both at the end of my term. Singling out some of the functions I attended will be difficult, as every one that I attended was so special, such as meeting Danielle Farrington at the Integrated Youth Festival in Bailey Park, known for her wonderful artwork and murals around the town. I had the honour of leading the Town Councillors at D-Day80, our annual Remembrance Day Parade, and VE80.

Celebrating the Wales in Bloom winners was such a high for not only all the volunteers who worked so hard in providing wonderful planted areas for the judges, and collecting the winners plate for the Town Category at the Wales in Bloom dinner at The Angel Hotel was such a thrill.

Not all the Mayor's roles are taken seriously, as many found out! In front of 200 people I had a mental lapse, when I forgot a name, but through a process of elimination I did eventually remember who I was meant to be introducing!

The Community Dinner and Awards evening was a special highlight for me, as it took place at Llanwenarth Hall within my constituency. Congratulations to Matt

Lane, Danielle Farrington, Jo Nugent and the team at The Angel Hotel, Viv Evans and Mike Hodges who all received awards.

It's good to see Placemaking for Abergavenny is well on the way towards a final draft, with the outstanding help from Chris Jones, Owen Davies and their teams.

A special mention must go to Zoe and Ben, and all the brilliant staff at The Media Agency. How they put up with all my messing around (I think they have it on film)! Abergavenny had the privilege of having a 3D mapping of not only the Town Hall but other areas of the town, headed up by Leighton Morris and the Matterport system. Both my granddaughter Samiya and I were able to provide a piece to camera, that ended up being shown in the American Embassy in London, during a Matterport convention.

I have met so many wonderful people during my year, Helen Mifflin DL, the High Sheriff of Gwent, Catherine Fookes MP, and Jo Stevens MP, to name a few.

For one of my last official duties, I had the pleasure of inviting Abergavenny's under 12's Netball Team to the Mayor's Parlour, following their achievement of reaching the Welsh finals in North Wales. I was pleased to present a grant towards new kit for their National Competition. It was a joy to see them embracing their time visiting us, wearing the Council Robes and Mayor's chain of office, and you should certainly look out for them in years to come as potential Councillors.

It was an honour and privilege for an Abergavenny boy to become Abergavenny Town Mayor. Thank You for your kindness and support throughout my year as Mayor.



About this Report

In this report, we outline Abergavenny Town Council's goals for 2024-25 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, with 17 councillors across 6 wards, serves as the local governing body of Abergavenny representing the community. You can find details of all councillors, wards, and much more on 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 email: clerk@abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk

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 2024/2025 Annual Report marks our sixth consecutive report.

Each year, during the Annual Meeting in May, councillors elect the Mayor and Deputy Mayor. For 2024/2025, Councillor Chris Holland was appointed as Mayor, and Councillor Bryony Nicholson as

Deputy Mayor. Both Chris and Bryony made their mark on the council, with Chris focusing on enhancing accessibility and inclusivity for all in the town, and Bryony supporting new initiatives that benefit local communities. In addition, Chris selected two charities to support during his term as Mayor: Sight Cymru and Dandelion Wishes. These organisations reflect his commitment to supporting local causes that uplift and strengthen the community.



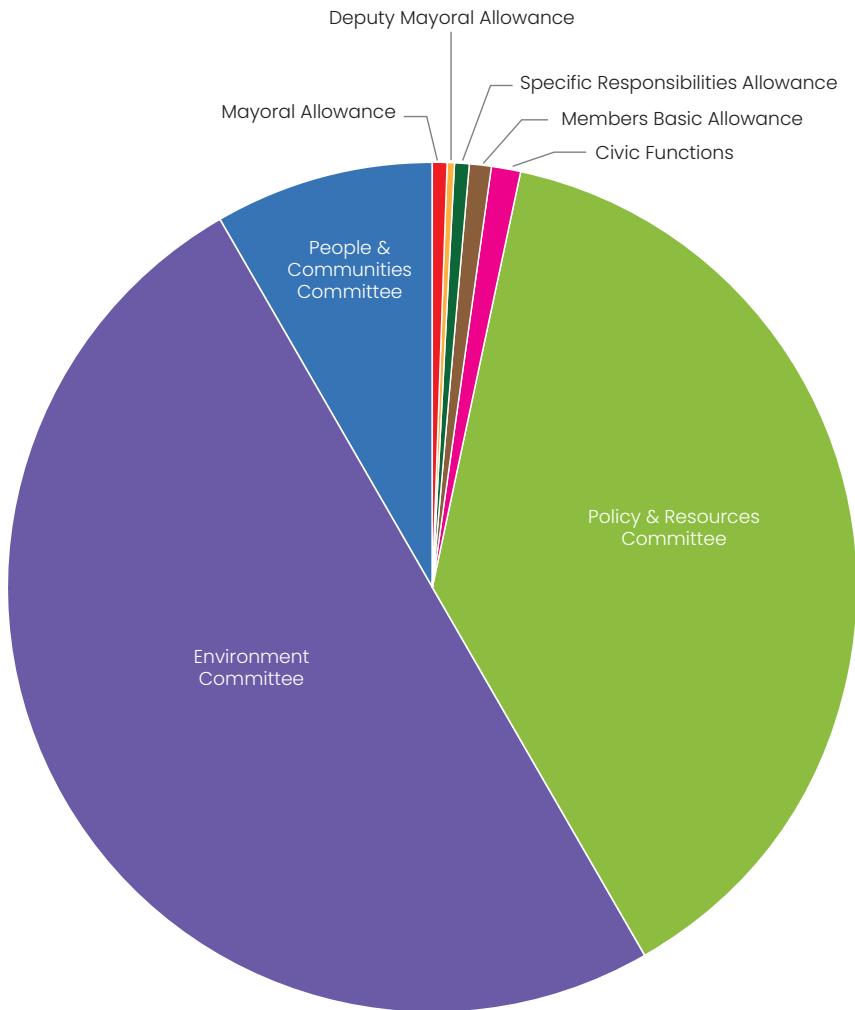
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The council's funding primarily comes from the precept, an additional charge added to Council Tax bills based on projected council expenditure. For the financial year 2024/2025, the precept was set at £594,136.

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 2024-2025 BUDGET





2024-25

Environment Committee	51%	
		£303,500
Policy & Resources Committee	39%	
		£231,350
People & Communities Committee	8%	
		£48,750
Members Basic Allowance	1%	
		£3,536
Civic Functions	1%	
		£3,500
Specific Responsibilities Allowance	0%	
		£1,500
Mayoral Allowance	0%	
		£1,500
Deputy Mayoral Allowance	0%	
		£500



ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE BUDGET



OF OVERALL BUDGET

Details of the spend and the percentage breakdown can be found on the next page.



2024-25

Town Team	49%	£150,000
		
Toilets	18%	£55,000
		
Planting inc Aber in Bloom	11%	£32,500
		
Dog Waste Bins	6%	£17,500
		
CCTV	5%	£3,500
		
Tourist Information Centre	4%	£15,000
		
Implementation of Action Plan	4%	£10,000
		
Environmental Groups Funding	2%	£5,000
		
Toilets; Sanitary Bins	1%	£2,000
		



POLICY AND RESOURCES

BUDGET



OF OVERALL BUDGET

Details of the spend and the percentage breakdown can be found on the next page.



2024-25

Salaries	35% / £80,000
	
Website and Social Management	8% / £18,000
	
Citizens Advice Bureau	7% / £16,000
	
MIND Monmouthshire	6% / £15,000
	
Small Grants Scheme	4% / £10,000
Abergavenny Community Centre/Trust	4% / £10,000
ACE	4% / £10,000
Food Festival	4% / £10,000
Melville	4% / £10,000
Borough Theatre	4% / £10,000
7 Corners	4% / £10,000
Election expenses	2% / £4,000
Large Grants	2% / £4,000
Black Mountain Jazz	2% / £4,000
Accountancy Fees	2% / £3,500
Printing & Annual Report Distribution (Formerly Printing & Stationery)	1% / £3,000
Abergavenny District Tourist Association	1% / £3,000
One Voice Wales	1% / £2,250
Office IT	1% / £2,000
Office Consumables	1% / £1,750
Training Courses	1% / £1,500
Insurances	1% / £1,500
Travel & Subsistence	0% / £750
Society of Local Council Clerks	0% / £600
Welsh Translation Fees	0% / £500



PEOPLE & COMMUNITIES

BUDGET

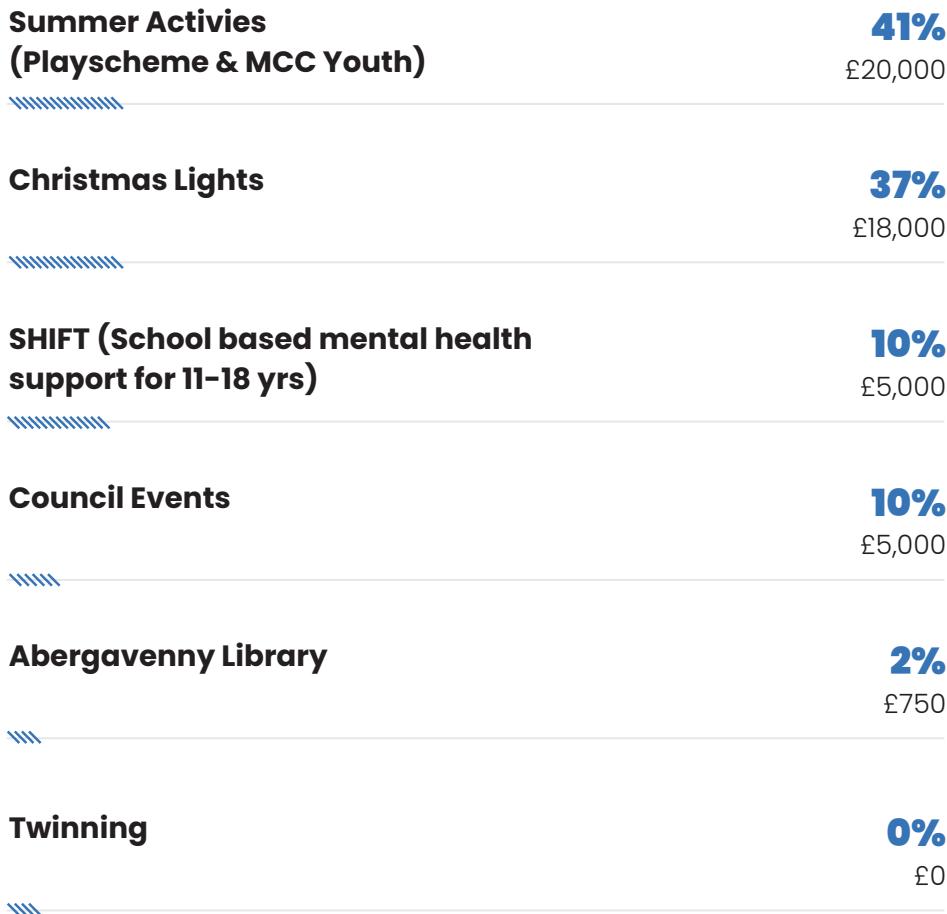


OF OVERALL BUDGET

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2024-25





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, abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk or by contacting the Principal Officer to request a copy. Here we set out how we've performed against the plan.



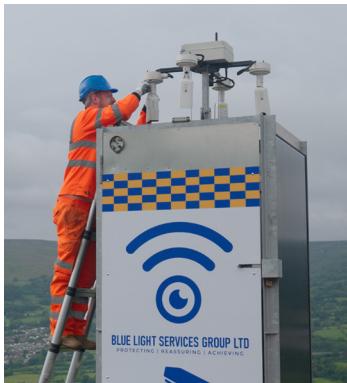
In 2024 and 2025, Abergavenny Town Council made remarkable strides toward fulfilling the promises set out in our action plan. Guided by our vision for a sustainable, inclusive, and prosperous community, we championed initiatives across environmental stewardship, community cohesion, economic prosperity, equality, and well-being.

From earning prestigious sustainability awards and performing exceptionally well in Wales in Bloom due to the hard work of the town volunteers, supporting mental health initiatives and moving through further plans for our Placemaking schemes, 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



Protecting Sugar Loaf Mountain Sustainably

In summer 2024, Abergavenny Town Council trialled a solar-powered CCTV camera on Sugar Loaf Mountain in partnership with Blue Light CCTV and National Trust. The project aimed to deter antisocial behaviour while protecting the natural landscape.

The eco-friendly system, powered entirely by renewable energy, delivered outstanding results reducing vandalism, littering, and emergency callouts without impacting the environment. With no complaints reported all summer, the council is now exploring annual monitoring.

This initiative proves sustainability, and public safety can go hand-in-hand.



Abergavenny Triumphs at Wales in Bloom

Abergavenny Town Council is proud to celebrate the town's success at the 2024 Wales in Bloom Awards, where Abergavenny received the Gold Award and achieved overall first place in the RHS Wales Town Category.

From community gardens and schools to parks and town centre spaces, groups across Abergavenny earned outstanding recognition. Highlights include Bailey Park and Laurie Jones Orchard both achieving Level 5 – Outstanding, and Our Lady and St Michael School sharing first place for School Garden.

Thanks to the incredible dedication of volunteers, schools, and local groups, Abergavenny continues to grow as a vibrant, sustainable, and welcoming town. The Town Council extends its heartfelt congratulations and gratitude to everyone who helped make this achievement possible.



The Town Team: Keeping Abergavenny Clean, Safe and Welcoming

When funding for the Town Team was withdrawn, Abergavenny Town Council worked with Monmouthshire County Council to develop a new Town Team service. Recognising the team's role in keeping the town clean, safe, and vibrant. The Town Council took over funding and management to ensure these everyday but essential duties continued without disruption.

From litter picking and graffiti removal, to helping with events and clearing drains, their work maintains the town's appearance. It also enhances civic pride and the visitor experience making them critical to the town's success and day-to-day wellbeing.



A Prosperous Wales



Bringing Culture to Life Through Creativity

Abergavenny Town Council continues to champion culture and tourism through its annual sponsorship of the Abergavenny Food Festival roof decorations. Designed by celebrated stage designer Bettina Reeves and brought to life with the help of local volunteers, the vibrant displays transform the Market Hall into an immersive celebration of food, farming, and sustainability.

These visually stunning decorations have become a tourist destination in their own right attracting thousands of visitors throughout the year and enhancing the town's cultural appeal. More than just decor, this initiative showcases community spirit, supports the arts, and promotes sustainable practices, making it a standout example of creative tourism done right.



Placemaking for Abergavenny's Future

In 2024, Abergavenny Town Council, in partnership with Monmouthshire County Council, launched a Town Centre Placemaking Plan to guide future development and investment.

Community input was at the heart of the process. Through walkabouts, stakeholder sessions, and public consultations, residents and businesses helped shape a long-term vision that reflects local priorities. The plan will serve as a strategic framework to support a thriving, sustainable, and inclusive Abergavenny.

A Healthier Wales



Restoring Local Heritage

Abergavenny Town Council is proud to highlight the incredible work carried out by local volunteers who have restored the historic stone planters at the town's bus station, just in time for the 2025 Abergavenny in Bloom judging.

These long-standing planters, once in need of repair, have been carefully repointed and rebuilt by two highly skilled volunteer stonemasons. Their dedication, craftsmanship, and many hours of hard work have breathed new life into a much-loved corner of the town, helping to brighten the area for residents and visitors alike. This project not only enhances the beauty of Abergavenny but also stands as a brilliant example of community spirit and pride in our shared public spaces.



A More Responsive Town Council (A Globally Responsible Wales)



Mayor Chris Holland Sworn In

In August 2024, Cllr Chris Holland was formally sworn in as Mayor of Abergavenny at a moving civic ceremony held at Gateway Church. A lifelong resident of the town, Chris delivered a heartfelt speech reflecting on his roots and commitment to giving back to the community.

Mayor Holland's focus for his term was on accessibility and inclusion. Working with Principal Officer Sandra Rosser and the Town Council team, he championed initiatives to make Abergavenny more welcoming for all. His chosen charities this year were Sight Cymru and Dandelion Wishes.

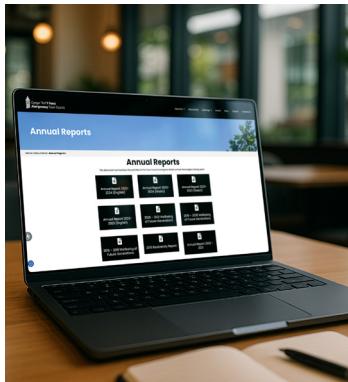


Mayor's Charity Night Raises Over £1,000 for Local Causes

Abergavenny Town Council hosted a successful charity evening at Gateway Church in support of the Mayor's chosen charities, Dandelion Wishes and Sight Cymru.

The evening featured live music from Brothers of Blues, guest talks from the charities, and a lively auction all of which contributed to raising an impressive £1,130. The Mayor, Cllr Chris Holland, presented each charity with a cheque, supporting their vital work in the local community.

Thanks go to The Angel Hotel, Sugar Loaf Vineyards, and a sponsor who wished to remain unnamed for donating auction prizes, and to everyone who attended and helped make the night such a success.



A Digital Shift Towards Transparent, Sustainable Governance

In 2024, Abergavenny Town Council modernised the way it shares information with residents by transitioning its Annual Report to a digital-first format. This change not only reduced environmental impact and printing costs but also responded to community calls for greater transparency.

Printed copies remain available on request, with collection points at the Library and Tourist Information Centre, and doorstep delivery for those unable to collect. The 2024/25 report also introduces a clearer financial breakdown and visual budget summaries making council spending easier to understand and more accessible than ever.



A Wales of Cohesive Communities



Honouring the Past, Inspiring the Future

In 2024, Abergavenny Town Council proudly delivered a moving programme of events to mark the 80th Anniversary of D-Day. From live-streamed proclamations and community gatherings to exhibitions and school workshops, the town came together to honour the bravery and sacrifice of those who served. A beacon lighting ceremony created a powerful moment of national unity.

This deep respect continued with the town's annual Remembrance Day Parade. This important tradition brings together veterans, local groups, and residents to pay tribute. Through these events, the council continues to protect and promote Abergavenny's rich heritage while ensuring future generations understand and remember.

A Resilient Wales



Marking 125 Years of Abergavenny Town Council:

2024 marked the 125th anniversary of Abergavenny Town Council, a milestone year celebrating over a century of local service and civic pride. To commemorate the occasion, we launched a series of videos capturing reflections from former Mayors, staff, and community figures on what the Council means to them and to the town.

Contributors included past Mayors, our Mace Bearer, and others who play a vital role in civic life. Their stories highlighted the evolving role of the Council, the importance of community leadership, and the shared commitment to shaping a positive future for Abergavenny.



Christmas Light Switch-On 2024: A Moment of Resilience and Unity

Just days before the Christmas Light Switch-On, a devastating fire tore through Frogmore Street, destroying local businesses and deeply affecting the community. In response, the Town Council worked quickly to ensure the event could still go ahead, safely adapting plans to protect the public and honour the town's traditions.

The result was a record-breaking turnout and an unforgettable show of unity. Paul Cable, despite his personal loss – still stepped up as Santa. The evening became a symbol of Abergavenny's unwavering spirit. It was more than a celebration, it was a moment that brought the town together when it was needed most.



A More Equal Wales



Supporting 30 Years of Fairtrade

Abergavenny Town Council was pleased to support Fairtrade Fortnight, marking the campaign's 30th anniversary. Fairtrade Fortnight continues to champion the importance of ethical and sustainable trading practices, ensuring that farmers and workers across the globe receive fair pay, safe working conditions, and the opportunity to build secure, sustainable livelihoods.

Monmouthshire Fairtrade hosted a range of activities from themed coffee mornings and educational talks to school events and participation in the Abergavenny Food Festival. Activities were designed to engage the whole community and raise awareness of the impact of Fairtrade.



Launching Our First Podcast Series

Abergavenny Town Council launched its first-ever podcast series, marking a new chapter in how we engage with our community. The podcast was created to open up conversations around local governance, representation, and the issues that matter most to residents – all in an accessible and engaging format.

The first episode, released on International Women's Day, featured Principal Officer Sandra Rosser, Councillor Laura Wright, and Chair of Monmouthshire County Council Su McConnell. Together, they explored the importance of International Women's Day and shared their personal experiences as women in local politics. With new episodes released monthly, the series continues to highlight local voices and strengthen community connection through storytelling and discussion.



Making Abergavenny Accessible for All

Abergavenny Town Council is proud to lead the way in digital accessibility. The launch of our 3D interactive walkthrough of key town landmarks, including the Market Hall, Theatre, and Tourist Information Centre. Developed in partnership with 3DPi and Accessibility Enterprise Ltd. This innovative tool allows residents and visitors to explore spaces virtually helping them plan visits with confidence.

From individuals with mobility needs to parents with pushchairs or neurodivergent visitors, the walkthrough provides valuable insight into accessibility features and layouts. It's a practical and inclusive step that reflects our ongoing commitment to making Abergavenny a welcoming town for everyone.



Abergavenny Town Council: A Year in Summary

2024/25 was a year of celebration, resilience, and progress for Abergavenny Town Council. From leading sustainability initiatives and enhancing digital engagement to delivering cherished community events and launching our first podcast series – we've continued to put residents at the heart of everything we do.

We marked our 125th anniversary with a heartfelt video series, reflecting on our past and looking ahead to a shared future. Our Town Team worked tirelessly to keep Abergavenny clean, safe, and vibrant. We supported vital services including public toilets, CCTV, floral displays, and dog waste collection and supported dozens of local organisations.

We listened to the community, digitising our Annual Report, adding financial transparency, and expanding accessibility with 3D building walkthroughs. Our projects ranged from the solar-powered camera at Sugar Loaf to the launch of a new Placemaking Plan for the town centre. In partnership with Monmouthshire County Council and local consultants, we're shaping a future that's sustainable, inclusive, and community led.

From cultural celebration to environmental stewardship, Abergavenny Town Council continues to deliver meaningful change for all who live, work, and visit our town.



Looking Ahead: Sustainable, Connected, and Community-First

As we look ahead, we remain focused on building a town that is accessible, green, and welcoming for all. Our Smart Town programme is already making strides, with tech-driven solutions reducing watering, improving public space maintenance, and lowering emissions; proving that digital innovation and sustainability can go hand-in-hand.

The launch of our podcast series has opened up new ways to connect with residents, and we'll continue using video, social media, and our new website to ensure everyone can engage with local issues, share feedback and celebrate achievements. Whether it's delivering events, supporting local charities, or improving public spaces, our commitment to service, inclusion, and transparency remains strong.

To stay involved, access council services, or learn about upcoming events, visit our website or get in touch using the contact details below. Abergavenny belongs to all of us and together, we'll continue to shape its future.



A summary of what we do

- We provide a Town Team to empty the litter bins and clean the streets in the Town Centre.
- We work with Monmouthshire County Council to keep public toilets open in the town and ensure the toilets in Bailey Park are open at weekends and throughout the summer holidays.
- We cover the costs for the provision of sanitary and nappy waste bins in the public toilets.
- We employ a contractor to empty the dog waste bins weekly.
- We provide the Christmas lights in the town and arrange the 'switch on' event.
- We work with Monmouthshire County Council to provide CCTV in the town centre.
- We manage and maintain the town centre planters, hanging baskets and other floral displays around the town, enhancing and promoting biodiversity.
- Provide financial support to ensure that the town has a Tourist Information Centre.
- Support local voluntary organisations and institutions like MIND Monmouthshire, Citizens Advice, Abergavenny Community Centre, and the Market Hall Decorations.

How to contact the Town Council

Contact the Principal Officer by email
clerk@abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk
or call **01873 353005** or visit
abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk

You can pop into the office on the first floor in the Town Hall, located opposite the entrance to the library. You can contact our Community Engagement and Support Officer on admin@abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk you can also contact our Deputy Principal Officer on office@abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk

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 Groucott • Labour • martyngroucott@abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk

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

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



**Cantref
Ward**

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

Cllr Bryony Nicholson • Labour • bryony nicholson@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

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



**Grofield
Ward**

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

Cllr Gethin Jones • Plaid Cymru • gethinjones@abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk

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

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

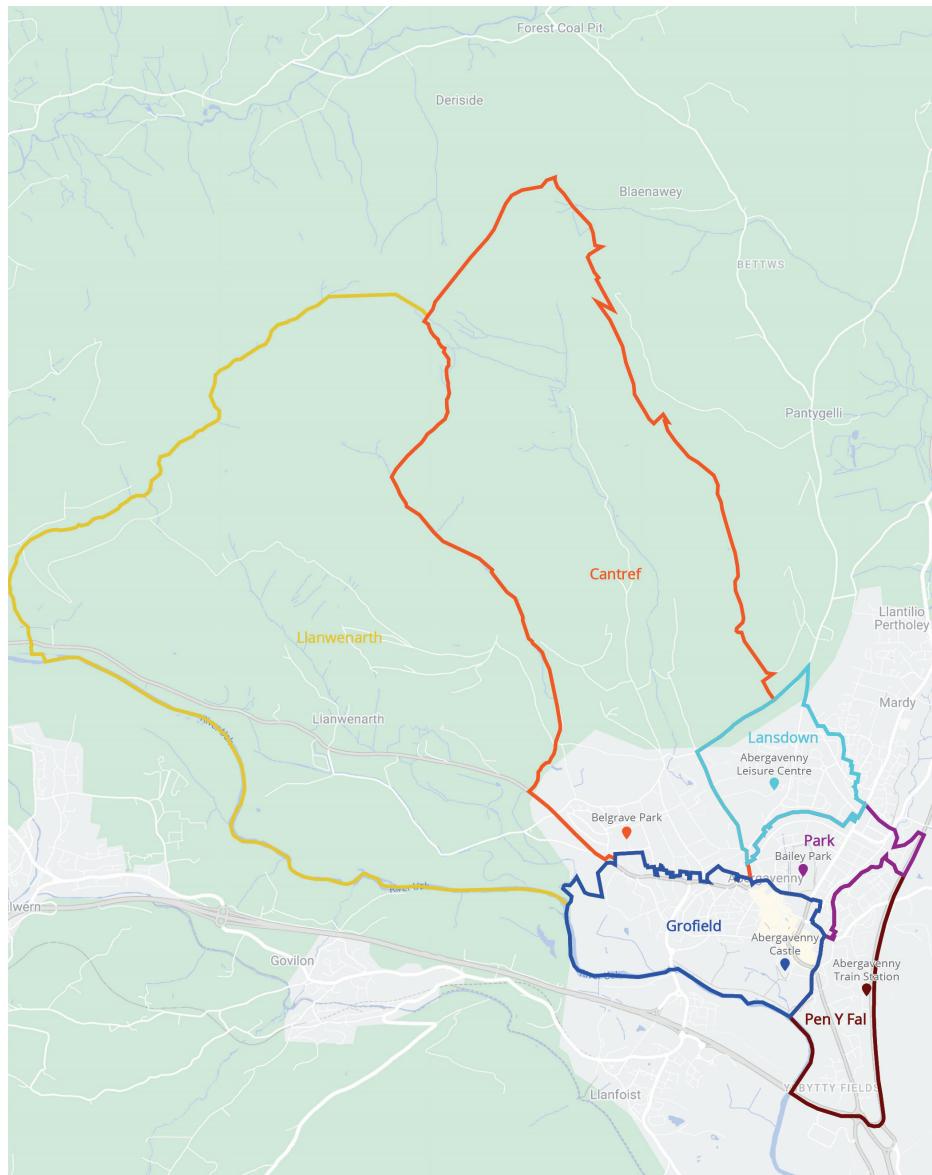


**Llanwenarth
Citra Ward**

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



Abergavenny Council Wards





Meet The Councillors

Pen y fal
Ward



Cllr Anne Wilde
Labour



Cllr Gareth Wilde
Labour



Cllr Maureen Powell
Conservative

Lansdown
Ward



Cllr Martyn Groucott
Labour



Cllr Mary Ann Brocklesby
Labour



Cllr James George
Independent

Cantref
Ward



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
Plaid Cymru



Cllr Maurice Barnes
Labour



Cllr Ben Callard
Labour

Llanwenarth
Citra Ward



Cllr Chris Holland
Independent