

Aberaeron Town Council Annual Report May 2023-April 2024

Town Mayor's Report to the May 2024 Annual Meeting

Once again it's been an honour and pleasure to represent both the Town Council and the residents of Aberaeron over the last year.

I started my term with my first official engagement on 11th May 2023 celebrating the retirement of Verona Ellis from Min-y-Môr Residential Home, having worked there for an impressive 47 years and 8 months.

On the 21st I was delighted to be invited to a Charity Car Run at Aberaeron RFC organized by Emily Bell raising money for Wales Air Ambulance and it was great to see some really cool cars.

On the 20th June I wished good luck to Guide Dogs Tracker, Busby (and Helen!) as they set off to complete the Aberaeron to Llanrhystud section of the Wales coastal path of their all Wales coast path challenge.

The 25th June was a historic day and day that we thought we might never see but the campaigning paid off and at 13:48 a new RNLI Shannon Lifeboat steamed into New Quay.

Imagine running around a school field being pelted with powder paint, well that's what happened at the Friends of Aberaeron Primary School's Colour Run on 29th June.

Aberaeron & New Quay Scouts held a fundraising fair and table-top sale in Square Field on 1st July and then on the 5th July I joined in the walk celebrating 15 years of the Ceredigion Coastal path. A few days later I joined Dyfed Powys Police PCSOs in painting the Chalybeate Well.

In July I was invited to the annual six-a-side Aberaeron Cricket Festival and I'm sure that Aberaeron was the only part of Ceredigion that didn't get much rain that day!

August was a busy month with the opening of Hive The Townhouse, the Art Exhibition in Tabernacle Chapel, Ray Ceredigion play day, the Vintage Show, Beer and Cider Festival, Mackerel Fiesta, Aberaeron 7s and of course the Annual Carnival.

One of the highlights this year was the annual Remembrance Service at the Memorial Hall where the Town Council wreath was laid in the presence of his Majesty's Lord Lieutenant, Miss Sara Edwards.

The Community Christmas was a great success with the usual cawl and mulled wine and of course a visit from Santa himself courtesy of the Round Table. Thank you to everybody who helped including fellow councillors, the school, businesses and others.

On the 7th December Ysgol Gynradd Aberaeron School Fair was held with many gifts

being made by the pupils themselves. This was quickly followed by the Memorial Hall Carol Evening which always gets everyone into the Christmas spirit.

On wet and wild Christmas Eve, the traditional Christmas presents were delivered to the Min-y-Môr residents on behalf of the Council and I was delighted that both my Father and Beca joined me to entertain the residents.

On Santes Dwynwen, day the 25th of January, Ffrindiau Ysgol Gynradd Aberaeron held an innovative sponsored event called Aberaeron to Llanddwyn and a total of 113 miles were run around a heart shaped course on Square Field. During the build to this event a daily video was dropped to promote the event, these were expertly created and included a cast of hundreds including quite a few councillors under the direction of Miss Sian Thomas.

As usual the annual Ysgol Gynradd Aberaeron St David's Day parade is one of the highlights of the year and thank goodness the weather stayed dry. Ffion and I were delighted to join the service by the pupils and sing along with Dafydd Pantrod at Tabernacle Chapel.

During March I was also fortunate to attend the Primary School Eisteddfod, Aeron's Got Talent and a visit to Aeron Arts.

My final official engagement took place at the start of May where I was pleased to present medals at the Junior Football Festival.

From the Council's perspective we have continued with the work of the Business Plan and corresponding Action Plan.

We have invested in a new sign for Parc-y-Fro and also three new items of playground equipment have replaced old and damaged items. Our monthly playground inspections continue.

The volunteer group have done amazing work with the flowerbeds led by Diana and Lloyd, and several litter picks have also taken place throughout the year.

We've completed the Town WiFi project and found a new location for the Town Webcam. There is still not much progress in the Aberaeron pictorial sign but that is not down to lack of effort.

It's not all good though and although rubbish does not fall within the remit of the Town Council this one public service that continues to experience problems on a weekly basis and leads to increased littering as a result of missed collections.

The harbour defence works has commenced and whilst there is going to be a lot of disruption there is much interest around the works and it will be worth it in the end.

In March we also welcomed Sian Stewart as the latest councillor so we have a full compliment going forwards and our success will be led by the new working groups which will be critical to the operational functionality of our Council as we take over more services.

Finally, I thank you all but particularly Aled my Deputy, fellow councillors, my family and friends for the support that everyone has given me during my time as Town Mayor. It would be amiss of me not to forget to thank the Clerk for keeping me on the straight and narrow.

Diolch

Rhodri Jones

Organisation of the Council

Aberaeron Town Council is the most local tier of local government for the town of Aberaeron and is a local authority established by way of the Local Government Act 1972.

The Council comprises twelve elected Members.

The Members during the 2023-24 municipal year were Councillors Rhodri Jones (Town Mayor), Aled Davies (Deputy Town Mayor), Tim Archer, Phill Davies, Rhys Davies, Darryl Evans, Elizabeth Evans, Lloyd Garvey, Aga Kalinowska, Diana Mace, Sian Stewart (co-opted February 2024) and Huw Thomas.

The Council employs a part-time Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer, Mr Denfer Morgan, who is responsible for the administration of the Council, including its finances.

The Council meets at 7:00 pm on the second Tuesday of each month at the Conference Room, Memorial Hall, Aberaeron, other than in August. In accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2021, meetings can be attended in person or by remote attendance using Teams.

The Council can be contacted by contacting the Clerk by emailing ctaberaeron@btinternet.com or telephoning 07749320915.

The Council's website is [Home - Aberaeron Town Council \(gov.wales\)](https://www.gov.wales/aberaeron)

Information provided on the website includes:

- Contact details
- Details of Councillors
- Calendar of meetings and agendas and minutes
- Financial information
- Policies

Business Plan 2021-24

The Council produced a Business Plan for the period 2021-24. Progress on the work is monitored at the monthly meetings.

The strategic aims for the period of this Business Plan are to:

1. Make the town an attractive place to live;
2. Promote business growth and enhanced employment opportunities;
3. Retain and improve services for the benefit of the town and the wider community;
4. Maintain and promote its cultural heritage and the Welsh Language;
5. Continue to develop Aberaeron as a major tourism destination. The Key Objectives of Aberaeron Town Council for the period of this Business Plan

It includes eleven key objectives to help achieve these strategic aims.

The main projects undertaken during the year were as follows:

- Improvements at Square Field and Parc-y-fro playgrounds, including repairs to equipment, safety surfaces and fencing
- Review of Christmas lighting
- Supporting the Dyfed-Powys Police CCTV programme for the Town
- Developing Banc Bach

The Council is working with the County Council to develop proposals for the following:

- A Town Regeneration Plan
- A Green-Blue Initiative
- Town Branding
- A Place Plan
- a Town app
- a Town WiFi service
- a webcam
- a Town Sign/Photopoint

The projects are progressed by way of an annual Action Plan which is reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

The full Business Plan is available on the Council's website.

Recreational and Amenity Land

The Council owns three areas of land in the town which it provides for recreational

and amenity purposes, namely:

- Square Field
- Parc-y-Fro
- Allt-y-graig woodland
- Banc Bach woodland.

Square Field has been designated the Ceredigion Centenary Field and is let to organisations to hold events such as the Garden Festival, West Wales Shire Horses Show, Ray Ceredigion Playday and the Annual Carnival. The Field is also used by the Aberaeron Football Club for holding games.

Services

The Council provides the following services:

- Children's playgrounds and recreation areas at Square Field and Parc-y-fro
- A woodland walk at Allt-y-graig
- Floral displays in the town
- Festoon lights at the Harbour
- An amenity area at Banc Bach.

The Council contributes to the cost of providing the following services by the Ceredigion County Council:

- South Beach toilets summer opening

These services are totally funded by the Council Taxpayers of Aberaeron for the benefit of its residents and visitors to the Town and the wider area. These services are essential for underpinning the infrastructure which underpins the tourist industry in the area.

Finance

The Council sets an Annual Budget in January which outlines its proposed expenditure for the following financial year. The expenditure reflects the proposals contained in the Business Plan and the services provided by the Council. This expenditure is funded by way of a precept which is set at the same time. The precept, in turn, is raised by way of a Council Tax payable by each dwelling within the town. Other sources of income are also used together with reserves.

The Council's budget for 2023-24, set at its Meeting held on 10th January 2023, was as follows:

Expenditure

£78,130

Income

Precept: £42,592

Reserves: £21,328

Council Tax

A Council Tax of £56 was approved for Band D properties in order to produce the Precept.

Annual Accounts

The latest Annual Accounts to have been audited by Audit Wales are those for the previous financial year, 2021-22. The Council received a 'qualified' report,.

The 2023-24 Annual Accounts have been approved by the Council and sent to Audit Wales for auditing.

Further details can be found on the Council's website.

Community Matters

Representing the Community

Ceredigion County Council is the local education authority, local highways authority, local planning authority and is responsible for the provision of social services for the County. The Town Council is consulted by Ceredigion County Council on certain matters.

The Town Council has made representations on the following during the year:

- Planning applications
- Relocation of the Town Library
- Aberaeron Conservation Area Review

Making financial contributions to local organisations.

The organisations supported during the year were:

Aberaeron and District Swimming Pool - £500
RNLI Big Orange Initiative - £500

Voluntary Action

The Council has established a group of volunteers to undertake various work including:

- cutting back and clearing growth at the Allt-y-graig woodland
- litter picking on its land and streets and pavements
- weedkilling on streets and pavements

Denfer Morgan
Town Clerk
January 2025