



Leominster Town Council 2023 Annual Report

Our 16 volunteer town councillors represent the North, South, East and West of the town with 4 councillors for each ward.

Together they guide our officer team, headed up by our Town Clerk, Julie Debbage PSLCC CiLCA, to use the council precept to benefit the town. Councillors sit on a number of committees. All our meetings, generally on Monday evenings at our 11 Corn Square offices, are open to the public. See the end of this paper for the many ways you can keep in touch with LTC. Here is the summary of LTC's principal achievements in this last year.

Full Council

- Appointed councillors to sit on 12 outside bodies.
- Completed the free community asset transfer of the Old Priory from Herefordshire Council. This is currently home to Leominster Foodbank, ECHO, YHA and Leominster Meeting Centre for those living with dementia
- Participated in the High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) Steering Group and a number of its sub-groups to design and deliver the programme of Conservation Area Appraisal, Public Realm Improvements, Town Wifi, Web App, Building Grants Scheme, Cultural Consortium - *Leominster Roars*, and small public engagement projects.
- Delivered a Shop Front Scheme as part of the Great Places to Visit Funding. 19 shops responded by repainting their shop fronts and lifting the look of the town.
- Signed the Civility and Respect pledge.
- Marked the passing of Queen Elizabeth II by enabling two books of condolence to be available to residents throughout the mourning period.
- Contributed funding to provide CCTV in Leominster.
- Continued to facilitate virtual weekly Team Leominster operational meetings and monthly tactical meetings to keep key organisations in touch with each other.
- Delivered monthly Talk Community surgeries at the Barons Cross Community Room with Team Leominster partners.
- Continued to administrate two local charities.
- Hosted a prospective councillor event to promote local democracy.
- Provided winter Warm Space sessions at the Town Council offices, supported by Talk Community funding.
- Worked with local partners to develop proposals for better youth provision in Leominster.
- Following consultation in September 2022, a precept request of £663,531 was submitted to Herefordshire Council. An increase of 10.7% for 2023-24. This equates to an extra £17.51 or 34 pence per week per year on a Band D property.
- Gained grant funding for a Feasibility Study of The Old Priory.

Environment and Services

- Carried out Lengthsman Drainage Works along our roads, including unblocking drains and ditching to alleviate highway flooding in the parish.
- Continued to maintain the verges and grass cutting in our open spaces around Leominster.
- Inspected and carried out minor repairs to town council owned play areas.
- Developed plans for the refurbishment of Central Car Park toilets.
- Continued to provide and clean the Grange toilet block.
- Continued the business Cardboard Recycling Scheme in town.
- As part of the post-Covid Great Places to Visit funding, we carried out the following;
 - Installed new seating in Corn Square and Broad Street
 - Installed accessible picnic benches in The Grange
 - Planted replacement trees in empty street tree pits around the town
 - Carried out major tree works on Etnam Street
 - Installed new litter bins on Etnam Street, Worcester Road and in The Grange
 - Resurfaced the footpath around The Grange
 - Installed a bench and notice board at Leominster Food Bank.
- Increased biodiversity by sowing 3 kilos of wildflower seed in Leominster Priory grounds.
- Enlarged the Ginhall Green wildflower area.
- Sponsored a planter and carried out the watering of all of the Leominster in Bloom Planters. Proud to contribute to another Gold Award for the town!
- Awarded a Queen's Tree of Trees – one of only two in the county. This was planted during a community event attended by the Lord Lieutenant, Deputy Lieutenants, High Sheriff and community groups based at the Old Priory.
- Implemented a Get Active Green Spaces Scheme, funded from the Government's Covid-19 Outbreak Management Funds grant as part of Herefordshire Council's recovery plan, supporting economic recovery and improving local wellbeing.
- Installed a community noticeboard at Barons Cross, with funding provided by the Talk Community Hub Scheme.
- Continued to erect stalls for the monthly Farmers' Market and other occasional events.
- Continued to trim and carry out minor repairs on Public Rights of Way.
- Revisited the Grange Masterplan project post COVID.
- Provided over 100 Allotment plots.

Finance & General Purposes Committee

- Carried out an autumn LTC budget consultation with residents at both the Friday Market, Farmers Market and via an online survey.
- Oversaw staff recruitment and a staffing review via the Personnel Sub-Committee.
- Partnered with HVOSS to provide free funding and project advice surgeries.

- Engaged a new Health & Safety/Human Resources Provider to advise the town council.
- Provided grant support for the following local organisations:

Leominster Community Centre	£8000
Leominster Air Force Cadets: radio equipment	£1030
Leominster Meeting Centre	£1000
Royal British Legion	£300
Melody Dance Group: free Summer Dance Camp for children	£2084
Kids Kitchen Collective CIC: delivery of family cooking sessions	£3500
The Priory Summer Holiday Club	£626
Leominster Community Choir	£792
Shopmobility	£1500
ECHO: paint and antennae for colour run to open Leominster Festival	£526
Leominster Festival: Climbing wall & lego spacewalk for family fun day	£1000

Planning and Highways

- Commented to Herefordshire Council (HC) on over 80 Planning applications and 4 licensing applications.
- Identified priorities for current and future S106 funding from larger developments in the town.
- Identified town centre streets for improvement as part of the additional Extraordinary Market Towns Maintenance Funding from HC. This included the recent delivery of resurfacing of West Street and Rainbow Street.
- Contributed to the following HC public consultations;
 - Agricultural Supplementary Planning Document
 - Attended the Local Plan 2021-41 Market Towns Workshop Event
 - Herefordshire Minerals & Waste Local Plan
 - Local Plan Place Shaping Consultation
 - Local Plan Policy Options
 - Rural Settlements and Environmental Survey
 - The Moving Traffic Offences Consultation
- Commented on a number of Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs)
- Commented on a number of Public Right of Way Diversion Orders.
- Requested information on Speed Indicator Devices and identified potential locations for installation.
- Subsidised the 427 Bus Replacement Service

Communications and Events

- Continued to oversee the Friday Market and the monthly Farmers Markets.
- Continued to manage the Tourist Information Centre and its activities, now moving to become an Information Centre for residents and visitors alike.

- Rented out offices and the Council Chamber, The Stable Gallery, The Secret Garden and the Servants Quarters holiday let to provide an income for LTC.
- Continued to be a partner of the Cultural Consortium, enabling a number of cultural events to run alongside the HSHAZ programme in Leominster, celebrating local heritage.
- Celebrated local community groups through the launching of a civic pledges initiative by town organisations at the annual Civic Service.
- Purchased town centre bunting as part of the Great Places to Visit funding projects.
- Organised a Food Fayre to celebrate locally sourced food.
- Supplied Christmas Lights and held a Christmas Light Switch On Event.
- Held our 25th Victorian Street Market Event with authentic entertainment.
- Delivered our second Leominster Independents Day following a local business forum.
- Participated in HSHAZ consultation events.
- Leominster Heritage Passport Children's trail implemented.
- Carried out a number of public engagement projects.
- Providing meeting spaces for several community organisations to hold daytime and evening meetings.
- Allowed the Old Priory to be used in training exercises for the Fire Service.
- Funded and organised holiday youth activities at Barons Cross.
- Launched a Community Celebration Fund to support activities and parties celebrating the Coronation of King Charles III.
- Worked with local partners to secure funding for Leominster Coronation events.

Keeping in touch with Leominster Town Council activities and plans

You can:-

- Visit our website for news, agendas and more.
- Follow our two Facebook pages: *Leominster Tourist Information* and *Mayor of Leominster*.
- Read our regular monthly spread in *Leominster News*.
- Email your councillors: their emails are on the website and in *Leominster News*.
- Attend our committee meetings on Monday evenings at 11 Corn Square: all open to the public, with time at the start for public questions.
- Visit 11, Corn Square, open Monday to Saturday 9.30-4pm. Our staff and volunteers look forward to meeting you.
 - Check out our notice board with posters about many upcoming events,
 - Use our *Information Corner* to find out about services you may find useful
 - Drop into our Stables Art Gallery, to see new exhibitions each month free of charge.
 - We also sell an attractive range of local gifts as well as tickets to local events.