

PRESTEIGNE AND NORTON TOWN COUNCIL



ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

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CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

Chairman's Introduction

Welcome to the fourth annual report, for the year 2024/25, which we hope will provide you with an insight & information of activities of the members of Presteigne and Norton council throughout this year, as well as ongoing and future plans for the benefit of the community.

Best Wishes to all

Trevor Owens, Chairman and Town Mayor 2024/25

ABOUT THE COUNCIL

Town and Community Councils are known as the first tier of local government, the tier closest to the residents they represent and consisting of local people working to benefit the local area.

The Town Council is consulted on –

Planning Applications and the Local Development Plan

Tree Works

Comments on County Council formal policy changes e.g. street lighting, affordable housing and changes to play areas, grass cutting, street cleaning etc.

Some Welsh Government formal policy changes e.g changes to Council Tax, second homes legislation.

It works on projects to benefit the local area –

Currently ongoing Projects -

Small Grant Fund for local community groups.

Provision of community defibrillators and their ongoing maintenance.

Storage Building on Went's Meadow (agreed 2024-25, commenced April 2025)

Brilliant Basics Access Paths Project on Went's Meadow (agreed 2024-25, commencing August 2025)

Some of our past completed Projects have been –

Presteigne and Norton Dark Skies.

Creation of new Nature Reserve.

Purchase of various play equipment items including zip wire for Wilson Terrace Playground.

Contribution towards new roundabout, Wilson Terrace Playground.

Purchase of new play equipment for Lugg View Play Area.

Securing land for an extension to Presteigne Cemetery (sold on to the County Council with the necessary planning permission).

Refurbishment of Town Benches (generously sponsored by a local resident)

Presteigne and Norton Town Investment Plan.

Campaign to secure investment and improvement by Welsh Water to the Presteigne and Norton Sewerage Infrastructure.

Building of Community Barn, a joint project with Sheep Music

Town Council Sites and Buildings –

The Council does not have an office and held its monthly meetings in the Assembly Rooms until March 2025. Meetings are now held in the East Radnorshire Day Centre and the Norton Community Hub by kind permission of both organisations. It has one part time paid Officer, the Clerk to the Council, Tracey Price.

It runs –

Eddie's Meadow and the former reservoir ground adjacent to the Warden.

Went's Meadow, skateboard bowl, outdoor gym and multi-use games area.

Community Barns, Went's Meadow.

Wilson Terrace Toilets.

Hereford Street Toilets.

Thirty-six small Allotment Gardens.

Nature Reserve adj to Warden Road.

Went's Meadow and the new community barn are available for use by community groups/local charities. Please do get in touch with the Clerk to the Council if you are interested in using the site for an event. Donations to help support the ongoing maintenance of the site are very welcome at any time!

The Council also has ten gazebos and ten small folding tables that can also be used when holding events in Presteigne and Norton.

Member Attendance 2024-25

	Possible	Actual Attended	%
NORTON WARD			
Cllr. Deb Edwards	13	13	100
Cllr. Andre Van Huls	13	12	92
Cllr. Curtis Ross	11	10	91
Cllr. John Wilding (resigned)	12	9	75
PRESTEIGNE WARD			
Cllr. L. Abecasis (resigned)	2	1	50
Cllr. Beverley Baynham	13	12	92
Cllr. Leigh Harling-Bowen	7	6	86
Cllr. Colin Kirkby MBE	13	9	69
Cllr. T. Owens	13	13	100
Cllr. Fiona Preece	13	11	85
Cllr. Mark Price	13	8	62
Cllr. James Ramsay	13	11	85
Cllr. Alex Ramsay	11	10	91
Cllr. Nicholas Rogers	7	4	57
Cllr. M. Williams	2	2	100

Your Town Council Members in 2024-25

2024-25 MAYOR, CLLR. TREVOR OWENS (PRESTEIGNE WARD)

Email: t.owens.pntc@gmail.com Telephone: 07910 072825

Trevor has lived in or around Presteigne and Norton all his life. He has enjoyed long associations with the football, cricket and Young Farmers Clubs and has also been MC at the Town Carnival. He works for the BBC and has been in the media world for over 30 years.

2024-25 DEPUTY MAYOR, CLLR ANDRE VAN HULS (NORTON WARD)

Email: andretowncouncil@outlook.com Telephone: 07528 579940

Andre has a background as a chef but now works as a telephone engineer. He is married with two children and moved to Norton from Stonewall Hill in April 2020 when he purchased his first home. He loves Norton and wants to be a part of the local progression.

CLLR. LEON ABECASIS (PRESTEIGNE WARD) RESIGNED JULY 2024

I moved into Presteigne 15 years ago and I have never felt more at home than I do here, that is down to the wonderful people who live and work here. Me and my partner Annemarie have been working at The Salty Dog for the past 11 years and during that time; I have been involved in; fundraising for the Presteigne Little People Play Group, organised (along with the members of Connect) The very successful Presteigne Food and Flower Festivals and the Christmas Fair, fought the ongoing fight against the town parking charges and the adoption of the recycling centre, which helped to raise a substantial amount of money for the community, all this whilst cooking some scrumptious food.

CLLR. BEVERLEY BAYNHAM (PRESTEIGNE WARD)

Email: cllr.beverley.baynham@powys.gov.uk Telephone: 07976 928039

Cllr. Beverley Baynham has been a councillor since 2008 and was Mayor for the first time in 2013. She is a traditional local farmers daughter who grew up in the area and attended school in Presteigne. She originally joined the council as she wished to put something back into the local community, and over time has worked on numerous community projects. She has two children and works as the Chief Officer for a local charitable

organisation in the private care sector. She has particular interests in facilities for children, affordable housing, the community and financial issues.

She is presently an LEA Governor of Presteigne Primary School and Newtown High School, representing the interests of the John Beddoes Campus.

In January 2014 Beverley resurrected Presteigne Carnival which ceased almost 20 years before, it turned out to be a huge success and has continued as a wonderful annual community event. Happy that the Carnival was once again established Beverley relinquished her role on the committee.

Beverley is qualified to Level 5 in NVQ's and Level 3 in the Association of Accounting Technicians. She considers herself to be a hardworking, enthusiastic and approachable Councillor.

In May 2017 Beverley was elected as County Councillor for Presteigne and Norton. During the term of office, she was Chairman of Powys County Council.

Beverley says – 'As an elected Councillor for the Presteigne Ward of Presteigne & Norton Town Council I carried out duties to the best of my ability represented the residents in a fair and appropriate way. For the period I was also the elected County Councillor for Presteigne & Norton. I attended monthly full council meetings and sat on the Staffing Sub-Committee and Dark Skies Working Group, some of these were online and some were in person when Covid allowed. I was involved with the culmination of the cemetery extension, which is a fantastic achievement for the Town Council and the town. I was also involved with the town wi-fi project and the grass cutting schedule to encourage bio-diversity. I continued to serve on the following outside organisations: John Beddoes Trust Fund, Newtown High School Governing Body, Presteigne Primary School Governing Body, Judges Lodging Museum Trust Powys, Powys Community Health Council and East Radnorshire Day Centre. I continued to support and assist the residents with a variety of issues. I have always considered the role a huge privilege and take my responsibilities very seriously and always try to do the best for the residents and the community.'

Note: Beverley stood again at the 2022 County Council elections, and was re-elected for the new Presteigne Ward.

CLLR. DEBORAH EDWARDS (NORTON WARD)

Email: cllr.deborah.edwards@powys.gov.uk

Telephone: 01544 260074 or 07794 351569

Deb says 'I have had the privilege to have been raised in this beautiful part of the world and have been lucky enough to gain employment locally and so to be able to stay and live here.' She worked for many years for the Royal Mail and so physically knows Presteigne and Norton well. She previously trained and engaged in the hospitality industry within the area. She hopes that residents will find her approachable, friendly and helpful.

Note: Deb was also elected as County Councillor for the newly formed Llangunllo with Norton Ward in May 2022.

CLLR. LEIGH HARLING-BOWEN (PRESTEIGNE WARD)(CO-OPTED SEPTEMBER 2024)

Address: Wychwood Cottage, Canon's Lane, Presteigne, LD8 2HE. Email: leighharlingbowenpntc@gmail.com

Leigh has been a resident of Presteigne and Norton since 1996 and has participated in several local initiatives. He was instrumental in Presteigne and Norton becoming the first International Dark Sky Community in England and Wales and continues to promote dark skies within Powys. Leigh volunteers with the charity Caring for God's Acre, as a member of the churchyard task team and regularly helps maintain St. Andrews churchyard in Norton (The Hub) as a wildflower meadow. He has organised bat surveys in the churchyard and has organised bat walks at the Withybeds, with the help of Radnorshire Wildlife Trust, with whom he is a Trustee. He is also a volunteer with Presteigne Carnival and with the Warden Guardians. Leigh is a scientist with a background in environmental management. He hopes that his experience will help make Presteigne and Norton become a more sustainable and environmentally responsible community.

CLLR. COLIN KIRKBY MBE (PRESTEIGNE WARD)(CO-OPTED JANUARY 2024)

Email: colinkirkbymbe@gmail.com Telephone: 01544 267811. Address: Castle Barn, 40a High Street, Presteigne, LD8 2BE.

Cllr. Kirkby first joined the Town Councillor in 1987 and has been Mayor on eight occasions. He stood down from the council in 2022 whilst he moved house and was co-opted back onto the council in 2024. He has been responsible for a number of hands on projects including the setting up of the Withy Beds nature reserve; the purchase of Lower Wents Meadow - three acres of ground for recreational use by the river Lugg on which the allotments were added; purchase of Silia Woods an important arboretum and backdrop to the community, which was gifted to the Woodland Trust; the setting up and running for 20 years of the Presteigne recycling centre which won 6 National Awards and put over £40,000 back into the community; obtaining grants for and leading the volunteers in the development of the Upper Wents Meadow after purchase by the Town Council, which included the refurbishment of an old barn, a community physic garden, footpath infrastructure, community orchards and the building of a skateboard and mountain bike track. He chaired the steering group and helped raise funding for the Welsh Assembly Funded Zero Waste Project which ran for three years from 2010 and achieved the highest recycling rate at that time in the UK of 74%. In 2013 he acquired an area of ground on the side of the Warden which has been dedicated to Cllr Eddie Taylor MBE and is managed as a hibernaculum. This was followed by persuading Welsh Water to gift the old reservoir on the Warden to the Town.

Other community interests have included being a Retained Fireman for 10 years, a board member of the Presteigne Festival of Music and the Arts for 15 years, Chairman of the Board of Governors at John Beddoes School for 10 years and a member of the Board of Trustees for the Judges Lodging Trust for 10 years and the internal auditor to Stapleton

Group Parish for 15 years. In 2013 he was awarded an MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours list for services to the Environment and to the Community of Powys (Presteigne).

CLLR. FIONA PREECE (PRESTEIGNE WARD)

Email: fiona.preeceptnc@gmail.com

Cllr Fiona Preece has lived in Norton and Presteigne all her life. She joined the Town Council because she would like to work to help all clubs and organisations in the area. She currently helps to run Presteigne Cubs, and she is also involved at district level for Scouting in Radnor. She considers herself a hard worker and tries to be an approachable councillor. She currently works for Powys County Council. Since the Radnorshire Arms closed she has been liaising with the VSCC to help with their visits to Presteigne each October and in particular with the anniversary celebrations in 2019. She considers herself a hard worker and tries to be an approachable councillor.

CLLR. MARK PRICE (PRESTEIGNE WARD) (CO-OPTED JULY 2022)

Telephone: 07831 670960

Email: markp2250@gmail.com

Mark was born and raised in Discoyd and has spent his entire life within 3 miles of Presteigne. He went to the Dame Anna Childe Primary School at Whitton, followed by John Beddoes High School. He worked alongside his father in the family agricultural contracting business, supporting farmers both locally and further afield. Being directly involved with the agricultural community has enabled him to see the protection and support needed for our community, covering both planning issues, pollution and the environment.

Cllr. ALEX RAMSAY (PRESTEIGNE WARD)(CO-OPTED JUNE 2024)

Clatterbrune Farmhouse, Greenfield Road, Presteigne, 8 2LB. Telephone: 01544 267461

Alex and his family moved from over the border in Shropshire to Presteigne in 1996, having long admired the town. Our children grew up happily here and he has never regretted moving to Radnorshire. He has been involved in volunteering for many events over the years, both as a long standing trustee of Sheep Music and in his professional capacity as a photographer, recording both people and events to build a small archive which he hopes will be of interest and value to future inhabitants of the community.

CLLR. JAMES RAMSAY (PRESTEIGNE WARD)(CO-OPTED JANUARY 2024)

Telephone: 07504 815937. Email: jramsay.pntc@gmail.com

James moved to Presteigne in 2016 to join other family members long resident in the town, and since then has become involved in a range of community activities – stewarding events, hospital driving, Presteigne Screen and, inevitably, the panto – and has also been able to use his professional environmental skills on the nature reserve and in river water testing. He is looking forward to helping develop the council's response to the climate and environment emergency.

CLLR. NICK ROGERS (PRESTEIGNE WARD)(CO-OPTED SEPTEMBER 2024). No information supplied.

CLLR. CURTIS ROSS (NORTON WARD) (CO-OPTED JUNE 2024)

Telephone 07515 915218 Email: curtisr.pntc@gmail.com

Cllr. Ross moved to Presteigne just as the UK entered the first COVID lockdown. He says - Despite the social restrictions, I was welcomed and supported into the community so wholeheartedly that I fell wholly in love with the place. I'm passionate about the environment and public service, and have worked for Powys County Council's Waste and Recycling team for over 8 years. I've also had the privilege of being a trustee for Sheep Music and volunteering with establishing and maintaining the Coed Llanandras Nature Reserve. I joined the Town Council to give back further to this wonderful community and to champion environmental causes in the area.

CLLR. JOHN WILDING (NORTON WARD) RESIGNED MAY 2025

Cllr. Wilding is a farmer and builder and lives in Norton. His family has lived in Norton for over 90 years. He has served as a Town and Community Councillor for 18 years and has served as Mayor for three terms of office.

CLLR. MARK WILLIAMS (PRESTEIGNE WARD) RESIGNED JULY 2024

Mark says - I've lived in or just outside Presteigne for almost 40 years during which I've engaged in many community activities including as a trustee and active member of Sheep Music (including as its chairperson), active involvement in ensuring that off-road rights of way are maintained, high street stewarding during Covid lockdowns, a panto regular, writing for and distributing Broad Sheep, helping manage Presteigne Screen, editing the Brecon & Radnor Express, volunteering at the Repair & Share Cafe, and volunteering at the town library. I hope all of this underlines my love of and commitment to this remarkable little town and my long-held ambition to become a Councillor.

I am especially interested in three areas of life in Presteigne: maintaining and developing cultural activities; ensuring that local retailers can survive and serve the needs of our community; that local services and housing benefit the *entire* community, not just the better-off.

<p>MAYOR FOR 2025-26 IS CLLR DEBORAH EDWARDS</p> <p>DEPUTY MAYOR FOR 2025-26 IS CLLR CURTIS ROSS</p>
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Council Memberships 2024-25

SITES AND BUILDINGS COMMITTEE

Cllrs. Baynham, Preece, Price, Kirkby, Ramsay
Outside Representative for Meadow Matters: Richard Rimington.
Outside Representative for Allotments: Susan Robson.
Outside Representative for Meadow Matters: Gareth Graham.
Outside Representative for Nature Reserve Matters: Rose Bamford.

STAFFING COMMITTEE

Cllrs. Baynham, Edwards, Wilding, Vanhuls and Owens.

CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT WORKING GROUP (Formed Nov 2024, previously a committee)

Cllrs Harling-Bowen, Edwards, Kirkby and Ramsay.
Plus two outside representatives – Hilary Rimington, Kate Van Den Ende
Agreed to continue this Committee for a further year and review May 2025.

LDP WORKING GROUP: Cllrs. Baynham, Edwards, Rogers, Price.

LEISURE CENTRE WORKING GROUP

To comprise all Members of the Council.
Outside Representatives: As needed.

DARK SKIES/INTELLIGENT LIGHTING WORKING GROUP

Cllrs. Baynham, Kirkby, Ramsay, Harling-Bowen.

ALLOTMENT LIAISON MEMBER: Cllr. Preece.

YOUTH REPRESENTATION MEMBER(S): Cllr. Owens.

REPRESENTATIVES ON OTHER BODIES

Presteigne Primary School	Cllr. Edwards.
One Voice Wales (2)	Mayor and Deputy Mayor.
PACDG	Cllr. Harling-Bowen.
Presteigne Trust (4)	Cllrs. Edwards, Vanhuls, Kirkby and Wilding.
East Radnorshire Care (2)	Cllrs. Edwards & Vanhuls.
Warden Guardian Foundation	Cllr. Kirkby

Reports from Committee Chairs

2024-25

Sites and Buildings Committee: Current Chair Cllr. Fiona Preece.

The Committee meets twice a year to consider matters relating to the Council's property/land in more detail than can happen at Full Council meetings. The Council owns and runs Went's Meadow, Eddie's Meadow, Coed Llanandras Nature Reserve, Allotments and two public toilet blocks.

As a Committee the Council is able to include members of the public by invitation in order to draw on their particular experience. Members of the public are part of the Committee and provide valuable knowledge and assistance with the running of the Council's sites.

Volunteer work days are occasionally organised to carry out maintenance and tidying works on the site. Thank you to everyone who comes to help out on work days.

If you would be interested in helping out on future work days please do get in touch with either myself or the Clerk to the Council and we will make sure we let you know if/when another is planned.

Staffing Committee: Chair – Vacant.

The Council has just one employee, the Town Clerk. All other works are carried out by contractors.

Climate and Environment Committee: Current Chair Cllr. James Ramsay. (Now the Climate & Environment Working Group: Current Chair Cllr. James Ramsay)

This Committee was formed in response to the Council's 2021 Climate Crisis Policy acknowledging the ongoing climate and ecological emergency. The Committee was given a wide remit: in addition to considering how best to promote nature conservation on Council-managed land and other climate-related initiatives, the Committee was "In general to consider the following areas and make recommendations to Full Council - Local resilience, Biodiversity, Local Food Consumption and Waste, Personal Initiatives, Transport and EV Charging, Tree Planting, carbon sequestration, Energy saving and production." In May 2024 the Committee was renamed the Climate and Environment Committee to better reflect its responsibilities and activities. During 2024-2025 the Committee met twice, with a focus on biodiversity topics – hedge management around Went's and Eddie's Meadows, establishment of wildflower areas, management of the nature reserve including signage and support of the volunteers, and biodiversity on verges and roundabouts.

In October 2024 the Committee was dissolved, being replaced by a Climate and Environment Working Group which provides greater flexibility with a lower administrative overhead. Its role is similar – to support Council in implementing the Welsh Environment Act's statutory requirements for all councils to include energy and biodiversity considerations in all decision-making.

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS SUMMARY AND INFORMATION

The Town Council raises most of its funds through the Council Tax. It sets a budget each January for the forthcoming financial year (April to March).

2024-25 Spending summary (full accounts, annual budget etc are on the website)

2024-25	£
Administration	36,065.53
Grants/Donations	13,449
Member's Allowances/Expenses	416.00
Public Toilets	9362.86
Running of Went's Meadow	11,374.77
Allotments	963.32
Nature Reserve	184.63
War Memorial and Milestone	975
Installation of Christmas Lights	945.55
High Street Grant (grant funded)	49,892.39
Misc.	1624.27
VAT (is reclaimed)	2864.22
Total	128,217.47

SMALL GRANTS

The general grants/donations awarded in the year were to –

Donations and S137s	
Air Ambulance	250
British Legion (Remembrance Wreaths)	75
East Radnorshire Care	2000
Memorial Hall	1000
Mid Border Arts	1500
Norton Community Trust	2000
Norton Community Trust (Fireworks)	400
PACDG	250
Presteigne Festival	1250
Presteigne Fireworks Display (Sheep Music)	500
Presteigne & Norton Community Support	250
The Judge's Lodging Trust Ltd	2000
Powys CAB	200
The Samaritans	250
Youth Project	1000
	12,925.00

The Climate and Environment Grants awarded were –

Presteigne Little People's Playgroup	250
Eco Funding Event	25
Presteigne Community Garden	249
	524

Any group or organization wishing to apply for a small grant should contact the Clerk for more information.

Note: In order to be considered for inclusion in the budget for the following financial year please apply by 1st January i.e., for a grant in 2026-27 you will need to apply by 30th November, 2025.

A major project supported by the Council in recent years has been the creation of the Norton Community Hub. Please see the following pages for a report from the Hub Committee.

NORTON COMMUNITY HUB

Under the supervision of the Presteigne and Norton Community Trust, the project to adapt the former church in Norton as a community Hub was successfully completed and the Hub was officially opened by the High Sheriff of Powys in June 2024.

The Hub began operating in March 2024 and since then has been the venue for a wide range of community shows and events including regular coffee mornings, senior lunches, a book club and knit n' natter group.

The programme of events has been organised by a team of active volunteers, with all the activities being well supported by the local community.

The Hub management committee have also taken responsibility for established village events including the annual Norton Show, the Bonfire and Fireworks event and the annual harvest lunch. This ensures better use of resources and helps to secure the long-term sustainability of the Hub.

Income from events and local donations during the year was £33,000

The management committee has planned a further range of events for the year ahead and has also initiated a project to restore the bell tower clock which will require grant funding.

DARK SKIES PROJECT

In the UK today less than 10% of the population can enjoy a truly dark sky. Light pollution affects health, wildlife and energy consumption.

Following an approach to the Town Council from a local resident the Council has been working with the resident, a lighting designer and the County Council to investigate the possibility of applying for dark sky status for Presteigne and Norton.

The benefits of dark skies are –

To preserve the environment and protect the natural behaviour of nocturnal wildlife.

To enjoy the full experience of our night skies and to see our stars.

To appreciate the character and beauty of the natural landscape.

To protect our health and well-being.

Presteigne and Norton obtained International Dark Sky Community status in January 2024.

In April 2024 Presteigne and Norton Town Council was awarded the One Voice Wales sustainability award for the Presteigne and Norton International Dark Sky Community project.

During the period April 2024 to March 2025 light pollution measurements were undertaken at various sampling points around Presteigne and Norton. Also during this period, “Presteigne Dark Skies” presentations were given to TLT Llandrindod, Talgarth Town Council, PACE climate change and nature conference, Marches Astronomy Group and finally at the Brecon Dark Sky festival in September 2024.

During 2024-25 John Beddoes High School piloted the inclusion of dark sky education into its science curriculum.

At the Presteigne Music Festival in August 2024 the first concert, which showcased Michael Berkeley’s World premiere “Morning Star”, was dedicated to Presteigne being certified as the first International Dark Sky Community in Wales.

Presteigne and Norton is the first such International Dark Sky Community in Wales and England.



Assembly Rooms Before



Assembly Rooms After

NATURE RESERVE

Coed Llanandras – Presteigne's Community Woodland Nature Reserve



The new 3.4 ha (8.4 acres) nature reserve was established in 2023 following purchase of the site by the Council in November 2022 thanks to a grant from the Welsh Government's Woodland Creation Fund¹. Formerly pasture with some specimen 19th Century trees, and partly designated as Historic Park and Garden by Cadw, the site, between the Warden and the Primary School, is developing into a variety of habitats including grassland, broadleaved woodland and wetlands, as well as a small community orchard. The reserve has educational and recreational purposes as well as ecological, is part of the National Forest for Wales, and is becoming a much-loved local resource.

Management is carried out by volunteers with a small budget from the Council and grants from various sources. The principal tasks in 2023 were constructing the entrance gateway and

access path, planting some 2000 trees and building two ponds. Activities from April 2024 to April 2025 included mowing and seeding of wildflower areas, dock and thistle removal, building a hibernaculum for slow worms by the local Squirrels (4-6 year old Scouts), construction of an insect hotel by children from the adjacent Primary School and another by other visiting children, planting wetland plants around the upper pond, weekly butterfly monitoring and regular path mowing. A special event was the Community Engagement and Bioblitz Day on 25 May, led by an experienced wildlife biologist, Tim Kaye.



¹ Administered by the National Heritage Lottery Fund



Grants were received from Powys Nature Partnership's Nature Recovery in Your Community Fund, and were used to purchase wetland plants, hand tools, and additional trees.

There are two ponds on the reserve. Since the original excavations did not hold water, in October 2023 remaining grant funds were used to enlarge both ponds and line them with bentonite clay, an inert waterproofing material. This proved effective over the 2024 summer, which was cool and wet. 2025 is likely to be more challenging, due to the lack of rain and high temperatures. Nevertheless, the ponds have attracted a variety of waterbirds and are making a significant contribution to the reserve's biodiversity.



TOWN WIFI

In July 2021 the Town Council was approached by the County Council to establish its interest in providing free wifi in the town centre.

Thanks is due to the following for continuing to site the units –

The Salty Dog

The Old School (Prestegne Youth Project)

The Royal Oak

Powys County Council – Assembly Rooms

In addition to providing the free wifi the system provides visitor data (numbers/length of stay etc) which can be supplied to businesses and used to provide supporting information for grant applications etc.

The system is up and running and available for use for both residents and visitors when out and about in the town.



HIGH STREET GRANT PROJECT

During 2024/25 working in partnership with the County Council and various High Street businesses the Town Council has applied for and received a total grant of just under £50,000 to enable businesses in the centre of town to improve and renovate their shop fronts. Businesses needed to provide an element of match funding and submit three quotes for the proposed works.

Thanks are due to everyone involved for their work and the project. The various properties look really smart.

ALLOTMENTS

The Council applied for a small grant for the allotment site to provide two raised beds on one of the smaller plots and a picnic bench to have on the site. After some delay in the funding being awarded and then spent these were installed recently.

UPCOMING PROJECTS

For 2025-26 the Council has two main projects going forward and these are –

Community Storage Building: Grant funding of £20,000 was secured from the lottery in early 2025 together with pledged donations/commitments from the Town Council itself (£3000), Presteigne Carnival £1000 and Sheep Music £1000. Work commenced in April 2025 and the building is now almost complete.

Access Paths, Went's Meadow: In the Autumn of 2025 the Council applied for a grant from the Brilliant Basics Fund to improve access for all on the Went's Meadow site. Existing paths will be improved and their width increased and some new paths will be added. This will enable easier and better access to those less physically able, particularly those using wheelchairs, mobility scooters and of course also for pushchair/pram users. Expected to start in August 2025 this project will improve access for visitors across the site, particularly at times of events on the Meadow.

HOW CAN THE COUNCIL HELP YOU?

The Town Council is interested to know what you want from your Council.

If you have any ideas or suggestions for future projects please do get in touch or if there is an issue that needs attention, please let us know. There are also forms in the town library which you can complete and return to our Clerk.

Please note that the following matters fall under the County Council and as such the Town Council can lobby for action or change but it has no power to insist!

County Council matters are –

- Highways including road surfaces and potholes
- Street sweeping
- Refuse and Recycling
- Road Signs
- Verge grass cutting
- Council Housing
- Education
- Social Services
- Planning

The PCC switchboard number is 01597 826000

Details of how to contact your County Councillor can be found on their website - www.powys.gov.uk

<https://en.powys.gov.uk/findmycouncillor>

The Town Council benefits from an excellent working relationship with both our County Councillors – Cllr. Beverley Baynham for Presteigne and Ilr. Deborah Edwards for Norton. Both are very active Councillors and are always keen to hear of any problems or concerns.

A Summary

Presteigne and Norton Town Council covers Presteigne Town, Norton village and surrounding areas.

It is made up of thirteen Councillors and has one paid part time officer, the Clerk to the Council.

Members during 2024-25 were –

Trevor Owens (Chairman/Mayor)

Vice-Chairman/Deputy Mayor) Andre Van Huls

Leon Abecasis (now resigned)

Beverley Baynham

Deborah Edwards

Leigh Harling-Bowen

Colin Kirkby MBE

Mark Price

Fiona Preece

Alex Ramsay

Jamie Ramsay

Nick Rogers

Curtis Ross

John Wilding (now resigned)

Mark Williams (now resigned)

One current vacancy – to be filled by co-option July 2025.

Contact Us

Tracey Price, Clerk to the Council

Garn Farm, Chapel Lawn, Shropshire, SY7 0BT

Phone: 07866 815622

Email: presteigneandnortontc@outlook.com

Web: <http://presteigne.org.uk/>

NB New website launching soon.



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