



HAVERFORDWEST TOWN COUNCIL

Many voices, one town, heart of the county

ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25



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INTRODUCTION

- Section 52 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 requires community councils, as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of each financial year, to prepare and publish an annual report about the council's priorities, activities and achievements over the previous year.
- Community councils are currently required to prepare and publish other reports. Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 requires all community councils to prepare and publish a plan every three years setting out what they propose to do to maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote resilience. Under section 6(7) of the 2016 Act, the first such report was required to be published before the end of 2019 with all subsequent reports due for publication before the end of every third year after 2019. The Council produced biodiversity reports in 2019 and 2022.
- Section 40 of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires some community councils to publish a report annually on the progress made in meeting the local wellbeing objectives in its area. The relevant councils are those with an annual turnover of £200,000 or more in the three financial years prior to the local well-being plan being published.
- Community councils can choose whether to prepare separate annual and biodiversity reports or combine these into a single report. Haverfordwest Town Council (the Council) currently prepares a separate biodiversity report and this will be published by the end of the calendar year 2025.

Town Clerk
June 2025

HAVERFORDWEST TOWN

Haverfordwest (Welsh: *Hwlfordd*) is the county town of Pembrokeshire, in southwest Wales. With a population of around 12,000 (2021 Census), it is the largest settlement in the county and a key administrative, commercial, and cultural hub.

Location

Nestled on the banks of the **Western Cleddau River**, Haverfordwest sits at the heart of Pembrokeshire, providing a gateway to the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park and nearby seaside towns such as Tenby, St Davids, and Milford Haven.

History & Heritage

Haverfordwest has a rich medieval history dating back to the 12th century:

- The **Norman castle**, still visible today, overlooks the town and is one of the oldest stone fortresses in Wales.
- The town grew as a trading centre and defensive stronghold, and many historic buildings still stand, including churches and Georgian architecture in the town centre.

Economy & Services

As the primary market town in Pembrokeshire:

- Haverfordwest offers a mix of **retail parks**, independent shops, supermarkets, and local markets.
- It is home to key public services including the **Pembrokeshire County Council**, **Withybush General Hospital**, schools, and law courts.

Transport Links

Haverfordwest is connected by:

- **Road** (A40) linking to Carmarthen and beyond.
- **Rail** via the West Wales Line with direct links to Swansea and Cardiff.
- Bus services connect to nearby towns and rural villages.

Education

The town includes:

- **Primary schools**, a **secondary school** (Haverfordwest High VC School),
- And access to **further education** via Pembrokeshire College in nearby Merlin's Bridge.

Community & Recreation

- Parks, riverside walks, and sports facilities are spread across the town.
- Haverfordwest Leisure Centre and Bridge Meadow Stadium (home of Haverfordwest County AFC) are key amenities.
- The Beating of the Bounds/River Festival, Food Festival, and cultural events attract residents and tourists alike.

Demographics

According to the 2021 Census:

- Population: **12,086** (built-up area)
- Age profile: Approx. 23% aged under 18, 58% working age, 19% aged 65+
- The town remains largely White British but has a growing multicultural community.

ABOUT THE COUNCIL

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.

Haverfordwest Town Council (the Council) serves the area of Haverfordwest and is made up of 17 elected, or co-opted, members who represent the five wards, advised by the Clerk to the Council.

Chairman to Council, Mayor and Admiral of the Port of Haverfordwest:

Cllr. Martin Lewis

Clerk to the Council / Responsible Finance Officer:

Vanessa Lewis Camacho (since November 2023).

The Town Councillors by ward at the end of the Civic Year (May to April) are:

Castle:	Cllr J Hackett, Cllr D Thomas-Turner, Cllr R Thomas-Turner
Garth:	Cllr C Black, Cllr K Manikonda
Portfield:	Cllr A Brooker, Cllr H Lewis, Cllr B Simister, Cllr R Thomas
Prendergast:	Cllr T Moses, Cllr S Pearce
Priory:	Cllr M Lewis, Cllr P Lewis, Cllr Scott Thorley

There are 3 vacancies – 1 each in the Garth, Priory and Prendergast wards.

Councillors contribute to the work of the Council by suggesting ideas, engaging in constructive debate, interacting with their electors, behaving in an ethical way, and voting – enabling the Council to make decisions. They must act within the law and must sign a declaration to say they agree to work within the Code of Conduct.

Councillors cannot make decisions/promises individually – not even the Mayor. This has to be done by the Council as a corporate body. Councillors actively and constructively contribute to good governance and encourage community participation and residents' involvement in the work of the Council.

Details of how to contact a Haverfordwest Town Councillor may be found on the Council's website <https://haverfordwesttown.co.uk/>

Offices

The offices of the Town Council are located at the Old Wool Market, Quay Street, Haverfordwest and are open to the public from Monday to Friday 9.30am until 3.30pm.

Staffing

During the year there were 3 full time, 2 part time employees and 1 contracted adviser.

Responsibilities

The Council is responsible for the following services in the town:

- Review of Planning applications and decisions received from the County Council Planning Department as a statutory consultee

- Picton Centre, a community centre which is currently under a leasing arrangement with The Edge Youth Services
- Priory Saltings (nature reserve)
- St Martins Cemetery
- Lower Prendergast Cemetery
- Upper Prendergast Cemetery
- Civic and other Events
- Christmas light display in the town centre
- Floral displays and Summer bunting in the town centre and other town improvements
- Litter Picking Hub through Keep Wales Tidy
- Sports Pavilion (sports changing facility)
- Community Garden (Haverfordwest, under the management of Grwp Resilience)
- Acting as Sole Trustee of the Bridge Meadow Trust Haverfordwest, which provides recreational areas and facilities
- Providing financial grants and support to local organisations and good causes.

Meetings

Scheduled Full Council meetings are held on the third Thursday of every month except in August and in May. The Mayor Making Ceremony is usually held on the third Thursday in May. This is now preceded by the Annual Meeting also held in May.

There are two standing committees which meet monthly, on the second and third Thursday of each month, respectively, except during May and August.

The Emergency Committee only meets as required:

- **Management, Estates and Strategy Committee:** This committee is appointed to make recommendations and decisions about the general administration and management of property and estates.
- **Personnel, Policy and Finance Committee:** This committee is appointed to make recommendations and decisions about all matters relating to the personnel, policies and finances of the Council.
- **Emergency Committee:** This committee is appointed to make resolutions in relation to any matter deemed as urgent or an emergency by the Town Clerk and/or the Mayor/Chairman of the Council.

There are three appointed Sub-committees which meet as required:

- **Staffing Sub-Committee:** to make decisions about all staffing matters, subject to budget and expenditure limits decided by the Personnel, Policy and Finance Committee.
- **Christmas Lights Sub-Committee:** to make decisions on the provision, maintenance and installation of Christmas lights, subject to budget and expenditure limits decided by the Management, Estates and Strategy Committee.
- **Civic and Other Events Sub-Committee:** to organise civic and town events and support other community events; to consider requests from community groups and others for use of the Council's assets in relation to events; make decisions on the arrangements for and management of all Town Council events; and to monitor approved budgets. To approve spending within allocated budget, as specified in details action plans.

The County Council

The Town Council and **Pembrokeshire County Council** are located in the same town and within proximity of one another. Often the areas of responsibility of the County Council are confused with the Town Council resulting in the latter receiving a lot of inquiries.

The following matters fall under the County Council and as such Haverfordwest Town Council can lobby for action or change but it has no power to act directly or to insist.

Highways including road surfaces and potholes	Council Housing
Street Sweeping	Education
Refuse and Recycling collections and fly tipping	Social Services
Road Signs	Planning
Verge grass cutting	Libraries
Environmental Health	Licensing
Car Parks	Council Tax and Benefits
Playgrounds other than Bridge Meadow	Furniture and large household collections
Blue badges for disabled	Public realm/gardens

Details of the County Councillors for Haverfordwest Town, across the five wards, may be found on the County Council's website: [Your Councillors - Pembrokeshire County Council](#)

FINANCE AND EXPENDITURE

The main source of income is the precept; this is an amount of council tax paid by households in Haverfordwest which is collected by Pembrokeshire County Council. The annual precept for 2024-25 raised a total of £401,751 costing the average Band D Council taxpayer £78.75.

In December the Council calculates the money it needs to raise in order to provide for its services and fund any projects planned. It then deducts any other income it expects to receive leaving a net amount known as the precept. Members of Council and its Officers are responsible for the spending of public money in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations and are conscious of the Council's responsibility towards maintaining services and ensuring best value for its precept payers. An audit of the Council's finances and internal controls is carried out annually by an independent internal auditor. An external audit is then undertaken by Wales Audit Office.

Other streams of income include a lease arrangement for occupancy of the Picton Centre, hire of the Sports Pavilion, burial charges, banner and gazebo hire, and administration costs associated with the Bridge Meadow Trust Haverfordwest.

At 31 March 2025, expenditure totalled £432,380, including staff costs, ie salaries, PAYE, NI, Pension and related expenses of £161,810. Other expenditure totalling £270,570 is recorded within the Income & Expenditure statement in the Annual Return, which is approved by members of the Council by 30 June. Details are available from the Clerk and the relevant statutory notices of inspection are published in the financial section of the website. The Council has no external borrowing but retains general reserves to deal with unforeseen emergencies and earmarked reserves for specific expenditure that the Council believes it may incur in the future.

Grant payments (under S137 of the Local Government Act 1972)

During the financial year (April 2024 to March 2025) grants were made to:

Caer Elen Nursery
Grwp Resilience
Haverfordwest Allotments and Cottage Gardens Association
Haverfordwest RFC – Under 8s
Haverfordwest Yarn Bombers
Haverfordwest Regeneration Forum
Havershed
Lifepoint Church
Sea Cadets
PCNP Outdoor Schools Project
Pembrokeshire People First
Silbers CIC (Havergardd)
V C Gallery

And under Service Level Agreements held with:
Haverfordwest Racecourse (Public Park) Trust
Portfield Recreation Committee (Lower Racecourse)

And under an agreement with the County Council, to provide five-year support for Saturday opening at Glan Yr Afon/the Riverside Library from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2030.

EVENTS & PROJECTS

Civic and Other Events

The Council holds Civic and other town events which are open to members of the public to attend. These both commemorate and continue the historical traditions of the town.

- Mayor Making
- Civic Church Service
- Beating of the Bounds
- Remembrance Service/ Parade
- Civic Carol Service

Community Engagement

Councillors and the Town Clerk regularly engage with stakeholders on planning matters, regeneration projects and community interest projects, to consider and make public representation. Examples of engagement events include the holding of a regular Engagement Event (in Castle Ward, being the most central of the five wards), and Feed the Community, a cost-of-living initiative which ran through the winter months to support members of the community providing a warm meal and a quiet place to be for a few hours, as well as information and services from a variety of local organisations at no charge.

Meetings of Council are held in a hybrid format (in person and virtually) to enable members of the community to attend.

Provision of grant funding

The projects supported are to benefit the community and to be undertaken by the community. Criteria in accordance with the Wales Well-being and Future Generations Act and application scoring is used to ensure that the five ways of working (see summary in *Appendix A*) are considered in order to maximise the reach of each award.

Town Council Offices

Staff have been relocated to the front of the building facilitating contact with visitors with internal redecoration making it more inviting and engaging. The Council also provides meeting space for a several local trustee organisations and the Pembrokeshire area meeting of One Voice Wales.

Provision of amenities

The Town Council also provides a range of amenities across the area including:

- Sports Changing Facility located at the Lower Racecourse
- Community Centre occupied by Youth Services
- Burial Grounds – Upper Prendergast and St Martins
- Festive Displays (Christmas lights, town centre floral arrangements, summer bunting and other financial support to local organisation displays / activities

including the Yarn Bombers, Riverside Shopping and Pure West Radio at Christmas light switch on event)

- Priory Saltings Nature Reserve hosting a circular footpath with mixed habitat and riverside location. The Saltings is part of the Cleddau Reaches walkway that connects the town centre with green spaces
- Community Garden (Havergardd) managed by Grwp Resilience

ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2024-25

The past year has seen the Council and Staff return to a steadier state following a period of sudden change at the end of the prior financial year and recruitment of office and outside staff.

We have embraced new ways of working but also continued with traditional forms of communications and meetings. This report describes some of the ways in which the Council has responded to these changes, while supporting and sustaining communities and developing our presence as a town council and our locality.

This report also describes how the Council has continued to exercise its usual functions and meet its statutory obligations.

Some of the in-year highlights, measured against the Well-being Goals, include:

How the 5 ways of working have been used to shape the activity (see appendix A)	National Well-being Goal(s) this work as supported (see appendix B)
Fundraising for Paul Sartori Foundation The Mayor's Charity	 
Supporting the VC Gallery during flooding incident	  
Supporting Feed the Community Event	  
Renewal of Five-Year Financial Support for Haverfordwest Library	    
Installation of new steps to include a handrail at Priory Saltings Nature Reserve	 
VE80 Anniversary Events	  
Improvements to the Council's offices to make more welcoming to visitors and organisations who use meeting space	   

Re-instating the Award of Merit and Young Laurels Awards.	 
Installation of improved hybrid equipment for council meetings	    
Transfer to Scribe Accounting System with modular functionality for cemeteries administration and bookings system	 
Town improvements including the installation of Summer Bunting (May to August) in time for Haverfoodfest	 
Working hard to secure better venue for The Portfield Fair	  
Tackling anti-social behaviour through community engagement and CCTV	  
Green and Clean Volunteering Team	      
Promoting an active Litter Picking Hub	      
Engagement with new Haverfordwest Regeneration/Action Forum	     
Adoption of Welsh Government Anti-Racism Action Plan in Pembrokeshire	      
Receiving One Voice Wales Cost of Living Award	  
New Councillors & refreshed Training Plan	   
Working better together with Pembrokeshire County Council Departments and other stakeholders in the town	    

Improving our green spaces including those managed on behalf of the Bridge Meadow Haverfordwest Trust and other charitable organisations including:

- Bridge Meadow Play area improvement involving replacing bark, restoring fence and replacement of junior child swing and safety matting.
- Securing Pembrokeshire Nature Partnership (PNS) grant to instal air conditioning in the tractor used/stored with and maintained by the Haverfordwest Racecourse (Public Park) Trust at the Upper Racecourse in the town.
- Maintaining lawn area at St Martin's Cemetery and pathways up at the Priory Saltings Nature Reserve using the sit on mower / trailer also sourced through the PNS



LOOKING AHEAD IN 2025-26

How the 5 ways of working have been used to shape the activity (see appendix A)	National Well-being Goal(s) this work as supported (see appendix B)
Launch of New Website including Community page and town calendar	  
Plans to freshen up/replace Community Noticeboards	
Improve content of Council Chamber and Mayor's Parlour	 
Support more town improvements and putting on of events in collaboration with Pure West Radio to include the return of the Haverfordwest Carnival to return in 2025	    
Supporting Eisteddfod Y Garreg Las – being held in Pembrokeshire in August 2025 through the Mayor/Clerk's membership of Haverfordwest Area Committee, hosted at the Town Council's offices	    
Continuing to improve the Council's governance – using the SLCC Finance & Governance Toolkit (Wales)	  
Establishing longer term Council Business Plan	    

WELL-BEING PLAN FOR PEMBROKESHIRE

The Well-being Plan is about creating long-term lasting change which continues to improve and strengthen the well-being of communities and individuals in Pembrokeshire. It sets out how the Pembrokeshire Service Board (PSB) will work together to improve the well-being of people and communities in Pembrokeshire, now and in the future

Pembrokeshire's second Well-being Assessment was published in May 2022.

An executive summary is available which provides a snapshot of the main findings.

[Well-being Assessment - Pembrokeshire County Council](#)

Four Well-being Objectives were identified to act as the framework through which the PSB can prioritise as key areas of focus in its Well-being Plan.

- 1) Support growth, jobs and prosperity and enable the transition to a more sustainable and greener economy
- 2) Work with our communities to reduce inequalities and improve well-being
- 3) Promote and support initiatives to deliver decarbonisation, manage climate adaptation and tackle the nature emergency
- 4) Enable safe, connected, resourceful and diverse communities

See Appendices A and B for the Five Ways of Working and Seven National Well-being Goals

Appendix A:

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 gives a legally-binding common purpose of seven Well-being Goals and five Ways of Working designed to support and deliver a public service that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Ways of Working



Appendix B:

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

Seven National Well-being Goals

A prosperous Wales 	An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the Global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately, and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.
A resilient Wales 	A nation which remains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change.
A healthier Wales 	A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.
A more equal Wales 	A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances.
A Wales of cohesive communities 	Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.

A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language 	A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.
A globally responsible Wales 	A globally responsible Wales. A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being, and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).



Pictured: The Mayor, Councillor Martin Lewis, presenting a cheque to the Paul Sartori Foundation (the Mayor's Charity for 2024-25). Charity representatives: Sandra Dade (left) and Julia Brady (right).

We would like to hear your views about how we have performed. Would you like us to consider other ways to contribute to local Well-being?

Please let us know.

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