

Contact your Councillors

You may contact any of your Town Councillors to raise any issue of concern to the local community.

North Ward

Cllr Barry Audley
9 Princess Road, Swanage
Tel: 01929 424665

Cllr Mrs Gloria Marsh (D)
35 Mariners Drive, Swanage
Tel: 01929 422015
cllr.marsh@purbeck-dc.gov.uk

Cllr Bill Tite (D) (Town Mayor and County Councillor)
134 Kings Road, Swanage
Tel: 01929 481461
swanbase.w@virgin.net

Cllr Mike Whitwam
21 Swanbrook Mews, Swanage
Tel: 01929 422555
michael.whitwam@btconnect.com

Cllr Angelo Wiggins
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(D) = District Councillor

Town Meeting Thursday 24 March

Although organised by the Town Council, the annual Town Meeting or Parish Assembly is an open forum for residents to raise any issue of interest relating to Swanage. Representatives from a wide array of local organisations have been invited to attend and contribute including your Town, District and County Councillors, the local Police, Town Partnership and Education Swanage.

The Town Council is keen to hear your views on any issue featured in this newsletter. You can email comments to admin@swanage.gov.uk. Alternatively send a letter, or complete the slip below and return it to Swanage Town Council, Town Hall, High Street, Swanage BH19 2NZ.

Name and contact details:.....

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Comments:

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Have your
say -
reply slip

South Ward

Cllr Colin Bright
Stafford, 34 Ulwell Road, Swanage
Tel: 01929 426505

crbright@waitrose.com

Cllr Laurence Glyn-Cox
12 Battlemead, Swanage
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ldgcox@btinternet.com

Cllr Mike Hadley
1 Dolphin House, Peveril Point Road, Swanage
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Cllr Mrs Ali Patrick (D) (Deputy Mayor)
54 Steer Road, Swanage
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Cllr Steve Poultney
38 Rabling Road, Swanage
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Cllr Mike Pratt (D)
21 Princess Road, Swanage
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Cllr Gary Suttle (D)
Pinhowe, East Drove, Langton Matravers, Swanage
Tel: 01929 422093
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Spring 2011

Dr Martin Ayres
Town Clerk
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Meeting Dates

All meetings are open to the public and commence with 15 minutes of public participation time. Agendas are available on-line.

Policy & Planning
9.30am, Town Hall.
18th April, 23rd May,
20th June

Council

7.00pm Town Hall
preceded by a topical presentation at 6.30pm
4th April, 16th May
(Mayor making)
6th June

Finance and Performance Management

11th April, 9.30am

Transport Committee

25th May, 2.15pm

Tourism Committee

13th June, 10.00am

General Operations Committee

6th July, 9.30am

Swanage Matters

The official newsletter of Swanage Town Council

Town Council working to protect public services in Swanage

Swanage Town Council is dedicated to protecting public services in the town. Whilst the headlines are filled with news of local authority cutbacks, the Town Council has been able to set a budget that will ensure the services it delivers can continue to be provided in the current difficult economic conditions. Unlike the District and County Councils, the Town Council receives no central government support; it is mainly funded through its share of the council tax (known as the parish precept), car parks income and the interest on money received from the lease of Swanage Bay View Holiday Park.

As a result of efficiency savings, including careful contract management and a three-year recruitment freeze, the Town Council has been able to deliver a nil increase in its share of the Council Tax for 2011/12, leaving the average band D bill unchanged at £119.70. The Town Council has also adopted a Medium-Term Financial Strategy to plan its future finances, ensuring that adequate funds are available for service delivery and the improvement of its ageing buildings and facilities.

Projects for the year ahead include the long-awaited provision of changing facilities and refurbishment of toilets at King George's Field, improved signage and lighting in the

Council's car parks and improvements at the boat park.

Proposed cutbacks by Dorset County Council are of concern to the Town Council, especially as it has worked with local campaign groups over many years to oppose proposals to reduce the library service and close the day centre and household recycling centre.

The Town Council is engaged in discussions that may lead to the re-opening of the County Council-owned James Day care home following its closure last year. The future of the town's library and household recycling centre appear to be secure with large-scale investment being made to improve these facilities.

When the County Council withdrew funding for the Mount Scar School crossing patrol in 2006, the Town Council intervened to fund the service at a cost of approximately £4,000 per annum.

The Town Council is keen to ensure that other services in the town are protected. It has written to the Chief Executive of Dorset County Council stressing the importance of the Day Centre, Children's Centre and Youth Centre to local people. It has also opposed proposals for reductions in the travel arrangements for elderly users of the Day Centre and a reduction in the range of concessionary travel options.

Investment of Holiday Park proceeds

Swanage Town Council has invested the proceeds from the disposal of Swanage Bay View Holiday Park in order to provide income to help fund a wide range of services. Having taken advice from treasury management consultants Arlingclose, who advised clients against investments in Iceland prior to the financial crash, a total of £6.5 million has been invested across three institutions: Lloyds Bank, Barclays Bank and the Churches, Charities and Local Authorities Investment Fund.

With interest rates at an all-time low, it has been impossible to obtain a rate of return equivalent to that received from the Holiday Park in its best years. Nevertheless, it does mean that predicting the Town Council's total income is no longer dependent on the fluctuation of caravan sales.

Operation of the Holiday Park, restaurant and swimming pool passed to Darwin Holiday Parks under a 105 year lease from October 2009 for the gross sum of £7.25

million, together with an annual rental of £30,000. A proportion of the proceeds has been invested in a short-term money-market fund to ensure that monies are available for improvement works to Town Council property. This will also cover any liabilities arising from the disposal of the Holiday Park: the Business Sale Agreement contained time-limited indemnity clauses which made provision that, in certain circumstances, the Town Council would cover expenses incurred and/or income lost by the new park owners as a result of disputes with a group of caravan owners, styled the Bay View Caravan Owners' Association.

The Town Council's focus is now firmly set on ensuring that the interest received from the proceeds of the Park is devoted to improving the delivery of services to the town's residents and visitors so that the cost of the Council's activities is not fully borne by local residents through their Council Tax bills.

Local Elections on Thursday 5 May - Stand and Deliver!

The local elections provide a once-in-four years opportunity for local people to stand for election and deliver high-quality local services.

The Town Council has a vital role to play in enhancing the quality of life for local residents maintaining large areas of parkland and gardens, playing fields, allotments, a skate park, children's play areas, shoppers' car parks and sporting facilities.

It works to ensure that the town is an attractive and inviting place for visitors by providing a Tourist Information Centre, public conveniences and long-stay car parks. It also ensures that the main beach is maintained to European Blue Flag standards.

The Town Council is consulted on all planning applications and is the one voice in local government that can speak up solely for the best interests of local residents.

If you wish to stand for the Town Council, nominations must be received by noon on Monday 4 April.

The elections will take place at the usual four polling stations in Swanage between 7am and 10pm: Catholic Hall, All Saints Church, URC Church Hall and Herston Hall. The count will take place at Purbeck District Council on Friday 6 May and results will be posted on www.dorsetforyou.com.

If you require a nomination form or wish to vote by post, please telephone Electoral Services at Purbeck District Council on 01929 557219. Alternatively, visit www.dorsetforyou.com/elections for full information about local elections.

New Town Clerk

On 1 November 2010 Swanage Town Council appointed Dr Martin Ayres as its new Town Clerk. After attaining a first class honours degree in medieval and modern history at Royal Holloway College, University of London, Martin proceeded to postgraduate studies at the University of Leicester. He returned to Dorset in 2003 and began full-time employment with the Town Council a year later. Having served as Assistant and Deputy Town Clerk, he took up the reins as Acting Town Clerk following Alan Leeson's early retirement in March 2010.

Martin says: "I look forward to working with my dedicated team of colleagues to help Town Councillors deliver the high quality public services that contribute to Swanage being such a great place to live."

Martin has strong ties with the local community. Coming from a local family, he grew up in Wareham and was educated at The Purbeck School.

Former Town Councillor Lever

The Town Council is sad to record the death of former Town Councillor Jim Lever who died on 31 December at the age of 90. Councillor Lever was the first man to hold the office of Town Mayor for four years, between 1981 and 1984 and again in 1988-89. In total he served on the Town Council for 15 years from 1976 to 1991.

Volunteer of the Year

The Town Council has nominated Mrs Linda Welsh as its 2010 Volunteer of the Year. Mrs Welsh has served on Swanage Regatta and Carnival Committee for many years, most recently in the vital role of secretary, ensuring that the event runs smoothly and working with colleagues to distribute funds to many local charitable organisations. When told of the award Mrs Welsh said that she saw it as recognition for all of the team involved. The award was established by Purbeck District Council three years ago to recognise the dedicated work of members of the local community. Previous Swanage Volunteers of the Year have been Mrs Pauline Dorland for her work with Swanage Stroke Club and Mrs Lorna Haines for her fundraising for Swanage Skate Park.

Review of Council-owned properties

The Town Council has joined forces with Purbeck District Council, Dorset County Council, the Fire Service, Dorset Police and the NHS to carry out the Purbeck Asset Review. The aim is to review the use of property in the ownership of public bodies across Swanage and Purbeck to ensure that maximum benefit is gained and savings made wherever possible. One Swanage quick-win has been a review of the accommodation occupied by the Registrar and Citizens Advice Bureau at Swanage Town Hall which will lead to improvements including a new public waiting area.

The Town Council has also been in discussions with Dorset Police who are seeking to vacate the under-utilised Victorian police station in Argyle Road. In the coming weeks a final decision will be taken as to whether the police move into the annexe adjoining the Town Hall in the High Street. It is anticipated that such a move will secure the future of the police presence in the town in a more central location and at a lower cost to local taxpayers.



Swanage seafront

A report has been published following last summer's consultation when approximately 400 residents and visitors had their say on the possible regeneration and stabilisation of Swanage seafront along Shore Road.

This was a joint first stage consultation exercise with Purbeck District Council and the Town and Community Partnership.

The report can be accessed at www.dorsetforyou.com/395713 and a summary of the results is also displayed in the Town Hall foyer.

The clear message from respondents was to keep Swanage as Swanage and retain the green space along Shore Road as it's a great community asset and unique to the town. Popular suggestions include the installation of new outdoor showers, improvement or relocation of toilets and updating of the recreation ground play area. A covered exhibition/market/community space on Shore Road on the former shelter site was another idea that drew significant support.

In relation to traffic management, improvement to the appearance of the section of Shore Road that is closed to traffic during the summer was the most popular measure. Many other issues were raised about parking along the seafront and the safety of pedestrians along Shore Road, although Dorset County Council as the highway authority is unlikely to implement any schemes that are not seen to be 'strategically important'.

The Town Council has received the report and has prioritised the stabilisation and preservation of the seafront gardens. The District Council will be working with the Town Council this year to seek external funding for this and other projects in the town. Professional reports into the land slippage on the seafront have been commissioned and an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for improvement works is under consideration. **Further public consultation will be undertaken prior to any works.**



Can you help brighten up Swanage?

Swanage Lights Committee is urgently seeking the involvement of a number of active committee members to help with fundraising and the organisation of the annual Christmas event in Station Road. The Lights Committee has done excellent work over the last ten years, ensuring that Swanage is well illuminated in the summer and over the festive period. The committee meet approximately six times a year and enjoy working together to brighten up the town. **If you are willing to help this worthy cause, please contact Swanage Town Council.**

Core Strategy response

During November and December, Purbeck District Council undertook further consultation on its Core Strategy proposals for the development of housing and infrastructure in Purbeck over the next 20 years.

The consultation document did not set out specific housing sites in the town and the District Council has agreed that further consultation on this issue would be undertaken during the course of 2011. Nevertheless, the Strategy contains plans for 900 new dwellings in the town and neighbouring villages, meaning that the bulk of development in the District would be borne by Swanage. Whilst welcoming proposals for additional affordable housing, the Town Council has expressed serious concern about the proposed scale, which could threaten the natural environment, compound the problem of congestion on the A351 and erode the character of existing settlements due to the encouragement of excessive in-filling.

Other issues raised by the Town Council include the requirement to identify sites for additional allotments, the benefits to local businesses of planning for the introduction of superfast broadband and the need to prepare for potential tidal surge flooding.

The Town Council is in discussions with the District Council and other partners regarding the development of a 'vision for the future of Swanage' based on the preferences expressed by the local community. Further consultation is expected later this year following clarification of the Coalition Government's new planning framework.

Improvements at Beach Gardens

The Town Council has been pleased to work with the Bowls and Tennis Clubs to improve the facilities at Beach Gardens. The Tennis Club, Town Council and De Moulham Trust jointly funded the refurbishment of the tennis courts last autumn to a very high standard. As well as entering into an agreement to provide the Tennis Club with some security of tenure, this has enabled the club's coach to expand his training programme and hopefully encourage a greater number of young people to take up the sport.

The Bowls Club is also looking to encourage younger members and the Town Council has agreed to extend the young person's membership fee to those aged under 19 who remain in full-time education or training. Both the Bowls and Tennis Clubs are also planning to improve the facilities at the pavilion at Beach Gardens.

Together with the putting green, the bowling green and tennis courts are important sporting facilities for the town and are open to everyone. **Between May and September the kiosk is open daily for bookings, and at all other times the tennis courts can be booked via the Tourist Information Centre on 01929 422885.**