

REPORT by the Mayor (2010/11), Cllr Dr Micheal Turner

I am pleased to report on the activities of Lewes Town Council for the Municipal year ended May 2011. Your Councillors have, in regular Council meetings and various Working Parties, continued to address local issues; establish meaningful policies; set appropriate budgets; and generally to improve the quality of life for the community. I list below some of the salient points from the year. We have invited representatives from the community and other authorities, agencies, and organizations to assist us whenever that was helpful, and we have not shied-away from offering (hopefully constructive!) criticism if it was appropriate. We considered a presentation about proposals for a new Brighton to London railway line (known as *BML2*) but have reserved judgement until the implications for Lewes are clearer. We harbour some concerns that the number of trains which might stop at Lewes would be significantly reduced if the scheme's proposed tunnel were to be constructed through the Downs South and West of the town. We have submitted our evidence for accreditation under the national Quality Parish scheme, in order to give the Council greater flexibility in its operations. I am delighted to report that, in my year as Mayor, we have been able to raise around £7,000 for my charities – Parkinson's UK and the Lewes Victoria Hospital. This was as a result of fundraising events which included three showings of rediscovered films of Lewes in the 1930's – enormously popular with those who could spot themselves in the many close-ups – a Gala Evening of dance and song; a sponsored walk along the Meridian line; a theatre costume exhibition organized by the Mayoress and, finally, a Grand Fancy-dress Ball. This year has also seen the formal inauguration, after decades of debate, of the South Downs National Park Authority. We were proud, after our vigorous campaigning in recent years, to have the launch here in the Town Hall in the presence of the Minister. We look forward to helping develop Lewes's role as a gateway to the National Park.

During 2010/11 the Council has continued its work for the community in a variety of ways:

- ◇ By supporting local organizations with FINANCIAL GRANTS - we have given a total of around £60,000 in grants; helping more than fifty organizations – often small voluntary groups who could not obtain such help elsewhere.
- ◇ By providing the MALLING COMMUNITY CENTRE, and supporting the tenant Community Association. The Council is working with the Association to refurbish and improve the building, and will shortly be investigating the options for redesigning parts of it to offer a much broader range of uses and to improve the facilities for everyone.
- ◇ By acting as Trustees of the charity which ensures the PELL'S area remains as an enormously popular site for swimming; angling; walking; jogging; playing with the children; or just relaxing. The Council has worked this year with experts and representatives of the community, and with the Pells Pool Community Association, who have operated the pool for us each summer for the past eleven years, and committed significant funds to improve facilities at the pool as it celebrates its 150th year in 2011. This year we have expended a significant amount of money to renew ancient pipe-work, and to improve water circulation and quality and replace worn tiles and surrounding paving and stonework.
- ◇ By maintaining over 110 acres (43 hectares) of OPEN DOWNLAND at Landport Bottom, jointly-owned with the District Council, for public recreation and protection from development. Plans are already being drafted, with the Sussex Archaeological Society, for the 750th anniversary in 2014 of the historic Battle of Lewes, which took place on this land. Together with our co-owners we have held meetings with user-groups and initiated a year-long public consultation throughout 2011, to inform our management planning for the land.
- ◇ By diligently fulfilling our role as consultee on local PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT matters, and making considered and well-informed responses to major issues, we have acted as guardians for Lewes and the Conservation Areas within it – now controlled under the National Park Authority. A group of our Councillors visited Chichester to compare approaches to planning issues. We have a representative on the town's Conservation Areas Advisory Group who has undertaken training in this specialized area of planning.
- ◇ By ensuring that LOCAL ISSUES are properly considered when projects and works are planned by other authorities or organizations. We have lobbied, and will continue to do so, for a more common-sense approach to the treatment of pavements in icy weather. We campaigned for the

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inclusion of Lewes within the South Downs National Park, and pressed central government for fairer allocation of seats on the Park Authority for parish representatives. We have also supported national initiatives such as the “10:10” campaign to reduce carbon emissions. A survey of our Town Hall’s energy and water consumption was undertaken, and surprisingly few improvements were suggested to the way in which we manage this historic building. The practical improvements were immediately adopted, and a very impressive score obtained in our statutory energy audit. We have supported the Linklater Pavilion and recently granted finance to assist in the fitting-out of the building.

- ◇ By providing and maintaining ALLOTMENTS for over 230 tenants, across seven sites in the town. This year we have been able to offer several more people the opportunity to “grow their own” by sub-dividing larger plots that were too big for the tenants and by the development of a new mini-site at Landport. We have improved security at some of our sites, to cut down on intrusion and vandalism. At Paddock Road we are working in partnership with local residents and the District and County Councils to address the poor condition of the 100 metre-long flint wall which is such a prominent feature of the area. We have embraced the issue of local bio-diversity and are working with the Common Cause Cooperative to establish a scheme encouraging local residents to be more aware of the benefits of bio-diversity in their own domestic garden. The 2010 Allotments Show marked the fifth event since it was re-established by popular demand, after a gap of over twenty years, and continues to encourage a lively interest in growing our own food, and some quite “competitive” behaviour!
- ◇ By working to ensure the future of the LEWES PRIORY site and its historic heritage. The site has now been leased to Lewes Priory Trust, and 2010 saw the culmination of the Priory Park project, with over £800,000 support from the Heritage Lottery Fund enabling the removal of the ugly safety fencing and the establishment of a heritage park of which the town can be proud. This beautiful area now boasts all-weather pathways suitable for wheelchairs; superb graphical interpretation panels at strategic points, and safe steps and handrails allowing everyone to fully explore this internationally-important site. Closely-connected with this was our much-missed colleague, the late Cllr Hilary Black, whose untimely death a year ago shocked us all. She is remembered in the Priory herb garden to which she devoted such love and energy, by a bench seat dedicated to her memory.
- ◇ By managing and developing the ALL SAINTS ARTS & YOUTH CENTRE as a thriving, popular, venue for a huge range of entertainment and educational and recreational events and functions. This year All Saints has welcomed a huge number of users and visitors, and became firmly-established as the home of the Oyster Café - a fantastic self-help initiative by the local Oyster Project. We have recently bid farewell to our manager at the Centre of the past six years, who has returned to her native Canada, and welcomed a new manager who will seek to further develop this much-loved facility.
- ◇ By maintaining and operating the TOWN HALL as a focus for events ranging from the weekly market, through opera and light entertainment, to regular blood donor clinics, private weddings, and exhibitions. The building was an important focus for events during the Council-sponsored Tom Paine bicentenary festival in 2009, and retains the legacy of the “Taking Liberties” exhibition (in the Corn Exchange) kindly given by the British Library when it finished its popular “season” there. The festival culminated on 4th July 2010 with the unveiling, by Tony Benn, of the Marcus Cornish statue of Tom Paine on the library terrace. The Council records its gratitude to Janet Mortimer, who gifted the statue to the town. The occasion included the performance of a Mummer’s Play about Tom Paine; written and directed by yours truly Mike Turner. I was also pleased to write and direct a Mummer’s (or Tipteerers’) play *St George & the Iguanodon* to help celebrate St George’s day on 23rd April 2011, which performed to appreciative (I think!) audiences at Grange Gardens; Harvey’s Yard and the Gun Garden and raised yet more cash for my charities.
- ◇ The town was privileged to receive, on long-term loan from Mrs Jennifer Shelley, the Julian Bell painting *Lewes Listens* ; in memory of her late husband Alan Shelley. This is now displayed in the Town Hall to be appreciated by the public. We sponsored Kim Clark’s revision of *The Street Names of Lewes*, a booklet published by the Friends of Lewes. We capitalized on a need for an updated insurance inventory and, with Cllr Mike Chartier, I produced a booklet about the town’s collection of civic plate and insignia; updating Les Davey’s 1967 original. Many groups of UK and overseas

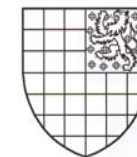
visitors come to the Town Hall in the course of a year, and their fascination for our history is good reason to keep such books up-to-date and available for sale or as civic gifts.

- ◇ We established in 2010 the Council's Youth Sports Award; for individual and team achievement, and were pleased to record the success of Lewes under 14 netball team in local leagues, when they collected their awards just before Christmas.
- ◇ Our Traffic Issues Working Party has lobbied the County Council with Lewesian concerns about the parking regime; we have supported the creation of a roundabout and crossing at the bottom of The Avenue, and the Council has committed funds to pay for two pedestrian crossings in Malling and the signage necessary to create a 20mph zone in Lewes.
- ◇ By installing and maintaining SEATS; LITTERBINS; AND BUS SHELTERS throughout the town. Our Town Ranger has continued his programme of restoration, to as-new condition, of the dozens of iron-and-wood bench seats in the town, made in the 1930's by the Every company at Lewes' Phoenix Ironworks – both good “recycling” practice and a mark of our respect for this significant element of Lewes' industrial history.
- ◇ By maintaining the war memorial, which has recently received a specialist deep-clean for the first time in many years.
- ◇ By supporting the 48-year-old cultural bonds with Lewes' TWIN TOWNS in France and Germany; as well as long-standing friendships with other European neighbours, and with Lewes, Delaware, in the USA. It has been my privilege, as Mayor, to represent the town in both France and Germany this year and to welcome colleagues from the Councils of both Blois and Waldshut-Tiengen alongside citizens from the Twinning Associations of both towns when they have visited Lewes. The Council has assisted in the work-experience placements of European students, hosting two itself, and helped facilitate exchanges of students and sportsmen/women.
- ◇ By fully participating in the historic and ceremonial life of the wider community of the County, as representatives of this ancient County Town of Sussex, including visits by members of the Royal Family. As Mayor this year, I have attended 215 events in Lewes and throughout Sussex, as the town's representative and ambassador.

I will end by repeating our open invitation to everyone to come and see how your local Council works; engage in our projects and let us know your views. Please see our website at www.lewes-tc.gov.uk for details of meetings and Councillors' drop-in surgeries. Remember; we are YOUR representatives, at the “grass-roots” of local government, and we need to know what you think. Every Councillor can be easily contacted; their details are on the website, and our offices at the Town Hall are open Monday to Friday, where our friendly staff are always pleased to help in any way they can.

Cllr Dr Micheal Turner
Mayor of Lewes 2010/11
May 2011

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS for the Financial Year 2010/2011



**LEWES
TOWN
COUNCIL**

We note below the summary information on our financial affairs as published in our statutory annual return.

This is **subject to audit** by external auditors appointed by the Audit Commission, having first been verified by our own auditor – who is also completely independent although commissioned directly by the Council.

This information represents only a basic summary, and considerable additional detail is provided for audit. A comprehensive set of accounts, with explanatory notes, is available on our website at www.lewes-tc.gov.uk. Copies are available at the Town Hall and we are happy to deal with enquiries at any time.

<i>line</i>	Year ending		Notes
	31 March 2010	31 March 2011	
	£	£	
1 Balances brought forward	501,867	574,147	<i>All figures rounded to nearest £, All figures agreed to underlying financial records</i> Total balances & reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in Council's financial accounts.
2 (+) Annual precept	763,000	782,000	Total amount of Council Tax precept received in the year.
3 (+) Total other receipts	141,100	135,104	Total receipts or income as recorded, LESS the precept (line 2). Includes support, discretionary, and revenue grants.
4 (-) Staff costs	374,394	372,032	Total expenditure made to and on behalf of all Council employees. Includes salaries/wages; PAYE & NI; pension contributions and related expenses.
5 (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	10,056	10,056	Total expenditure or payments of capital & interest made during the year on the Council's borrowings.
6 (-) Total other payments	447,370	390,884	Total expenditure or payments LESS staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7 (=) Balances carried forward	574,147	718,279	Total balances & reserves at the end of the year.
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8 Total cash & short term investments	553,052	691,040	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings, and short-term investments held at 31 st March (reconciled to bank).
9 Total fixed assets & long term assets	3,206,060	3,236,060	The recorded "book value" at 31 st March of all fixed assets owned by the Council and any other long-term assets (eg loans to third parties).
10 Total borrowings	103,611	98,157	The outstanding capital balance at 31 st March of all loans from third parties (incl. Public Works Loans Board).

The Council acts as sole Trustee for, and is responsible for managing, Trust assets. These are treated as part of the Council's normal operations, and are included in these summary figures.