

LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL EVENTS STRATEGY 2026

DRAFT

1. Introduction

Ledbury is a vibrant market town with a rich cultural heritage, supported by an active calendar of community and visitor-focused events. Ledbury Town Council recognises that events play a key role in strengthening community connections, supporting local organisations, promoting town identity, and encouraging visitors to explore the town. Ledbury already hosts a range of well-loved events including Community Day, Ledbury Poetry Festival, Heritage Open Days, and longstanding community celebrations like the Carnival and seeks to take a more coordinated and strategic approach to growing and supporting its event programme over the coming years.

The Council invests in events because they deliver wider benefits to the town. Well-planned events bring people together, encourage community participation, support local businesses and the local economy, celebrate Ledbury's heritage and culture, and help create a vibrant and welcoming town. This strategy sets out how the Council will ensure that its investment in events is well planned, provides value for money, and delivers lasting benefits for residents, businesses, and visitors.

2. Purpose of this Strategy

This Strategy sets out Ledbury Town Council's strategic approach to planning, delivering and supporting events. It establishes the Council's vision, objectives and priorities, and explains how success will be measured through partnership working, evaluation and continuous improvement.

2.1 Background

The strategy has been developed drawing on extensive knowledge of Ledbury's events history, informed by Officers and Councillors, and with the ongoing input of Members of the Events Working Party, who meet monthly to provide guidance and oversight.

2.2 Vision

Our Vision sets out our future aspirations for events and their impact:

Ledbury Town Council (LTC) events will contribute to a strong sense of community by celebrating heritage, promoting inclusivity, and supporting local groups, organisations, market traders, retailers and businesses across all sectors.

Looking ahead, Ledbury Town Council aspires for Ledbury to be recognised as one of Herefordshire's leading market towns for community and cultural events, delivering a balanced year-round programme that enhances civic pride, strengthens the local economy, celebrates the town's unique heritage and creates memorable experiences for residents and visitors alike.

Through collaboration, innovation and sustainable investment, the Council will continue to develop an events programme that reflects the needs of the community while contributing to the long-term vitality of the town centre.

LTC events will be influenced by the culture of the community and will recognise Ledbury's unique history, with the aim of bringing people together for enjoyable, engaging, and informative experiences. LTC events will strengthen identity and pride in our town.

To support this vision, the Council is actively seeking external funding, including entering the **Town of Culture grant**, to expand cultural opportunities, deliver higher-impact events, and enhance community engagement across Ledbury.

2.3 Mission

Our Mission sets out what we do, why we do it, and how we achieve it:

Ledbury Town Council (LTC) will lead, support and enable a diverse programme of events throughout the year for residents, visitors, community groups and businesses. Through partnership working and community engagement, the Council will help create inclusive, accessible and sustainable events that strengthen the local economy, celebrate Ledbury's heritage and provide opportunities for communities to thrive.

All events will be devised, developed, and assessed in line with a set of event assessment criteria and will support the Council's priorities.

This Strategy is supported by a suite of operational documents and policies including:

- Events Implementation Plan
- Event Toolkit and Guidance
- Event Risk Assessment Templates
- Event Management Plan
- Herefordshire Safety Advisory Group Guidance
- LTC Sustainability Policy
- LTC Corporate Plan
- Financial Regulations



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2.4 Guiding Principles

Ledbury Town Council will:

- Work collaboratively
- Deliver value for money
- Encourage innovation
- Promote sustainability
- Support local businesses
- Celebrate heritage
- Ensure accessibility
- Prioritise safety

3. Strategic Objectives

The Strategic Objectives have been developed and will guide the actions required to deliver the vision. They provide a clear framework for considering the programming of a variety of events either run or supported by LTC.

- **Community Strengthening:**
Events should foster community engagement, support local talent, and build a sense of pride in town identity.
- **Economic Support and Tourism:**
Events should contribute to a thriving local economy by drawing visitors, enhancing footfall in the town centre and supporting local traders.
- **Inclusivity and Accessibility:**
Events should be welcoming and accessible to people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities.
- **Resource Efficiency:**
Events should use Council resources responsibly and seek value for money.
- **Partnership and Collaboration:**
Events should support strong partnerships between the Town Council, local groups, businesses and volunteers.

3.1 Strategic Outcomes

During the lifetime of this Strategy, Ledbury Town Council will seek to:

- Deliver a balanced programme of events throughout the year that reflects the needs of residents and visitors.
- Increase opportunities for partnership delivery with community organisations, businesses and volunteers.
- Secure additional external funding and sponsorship to support the continued growth of the events programme.
- Increase town centre activity during key event periods through coordinated programming and promotion.
- Improve the quality and consistency of event evaluation to inform future decision making.
- Ensure all Council-supported events demonstrate high standards of accessibility, sustainability and public safety.

3.2 Event Categories

To support strategic planning and resource allocation, events will be classified into three types. It should be noted that there may be crossovers between categories, and events may evolve over time, so flexibility will be applied in their classification where appropriate.

The events listed below are not exclusive to Ledbury Town Council and are organised by businesses, community groups, or other external organisations. Where relevant, the Council may provide support or partnership, but ownership and delivery remain with the listed organiser.

Regional events	Major events with broad appeal that attract residents and visitors alike
Community Events	Smaller-scale events or activities primarily focused on residents supported by local residents, community groups and LTC



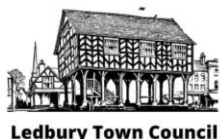
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Ledbury-linked Events	Town Centre events aim to bring residents and visitors to the retail area of the town, encourage people to spend locally and to promote a positive experience
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Examples but not limited to:

District Events	Info
Lakefest	https://www.lakefest.co.uk/
Ledbury Carnival	https://ledbury-carnival.co.uk/
Ledbury Poetry	https://ledburypoetry.org.uk/
Hellens Garden Festival	https://hellensgardenfestival.co.uk/
Ledbury's Light Switch on (LTC)	https://www.ledburytowncouncil.gov.uk/en-gb
Heritage Open Days	https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/
The Big Apple Blossom	https://www.bigapple.org.uk/
The Big Apple Harvest	https://www.bigapple.org.uk/
Ledbury Fringe	https://www.ledburyfringe.com/home
Eastnor Castle (e.g Chillifest)	https://eastnorcastle.com/whats-on/
Community Events	
Ledbury Community Day	https://www.ledburycommunityday.org.uk/
Great Big Green Week (LTC)	https://www.ledburytowncouncil.gov.uk/en-gb
Ledbury Mayors Mile (LTC)	https://www.ledburytowncouncil.gov.uk/en-gb
Ledbury's Got Talent (LTC)	https://www.ledburytowncouncil.gov.uk/en-gb
Ledbury Celebration (LTC)	https://www.ledburyfoodgroup.org/
Ledbury World Bookfest (LTC)	https://www.ledburytowncouncil.gov.uk/en-gb
Ledbury Horticultural Show	
Ledbury Dog Show	
Ledbury Linked Events	
Ledbury Big Breakfast	https://www.ledburyfoodgroup.org/category/big-breakfast/
Late Night Shopping	n/a
Independents' Day UK	https://www.indieretail.uk/
Malvern RHS Spring & Autum festival	https://royalthreecounties.co.uk/the-local-area/
Three Counties Showground	https://royalthreecounties.co.uk/the-local-area/

4. Programming events



The Council will seek to maintain a balanced programme of events throughout the year, ensuring activities are spread across the seasons and reflect the interests of residents, visitors and local businesses.

Council-led events are regularly reviewed, typically every 2–3 years, to assess their relevance, impact, and delivery standards. Events are scheduled to provide a balanced programme across the year, considering school holidays, heritage celebrations, and other town-wide initiatives.

5. Partnership and Sponsorship

Where a Ledbury Town Council event has reached the limits of what the Council can deliver, opportunities will be explored to work with community groups, local businesses, or other partners to transition responsibility for the event. The Council will remain actively involved as a partner, providing guidance, advice, and, where appropriate, financial support through Ledbury Town Council grants to help ensure the event's ongoing success.

Every effort will also be made to coordinate with other local events, encouraging them to extend their programmes into Ledbury town centre where feasible. This helps to avoid clashes, create synergies, and maximise the benefits to the community. Such an approach brings more activity into the town, supports local businesses, promotes the area to visitors, and aligns with sustainable practices by making the most of existing events rather than duplicating activity elsewhere.

The Council recognises that many local businesses wish to support community events, and sponsorship opportunities will be offered for many of Ledbury Town Council-led events. This approach helps to strengthen community engagement, sustain high-quality events, and provide businesses with meaningful ways to contribute to the town's cultural and social programme.

Where appropriate and when events arise within the town, the Council will seek to work collaboratively with local traders, businesses, and community groups to enhance the visibility and impact of the event through coordinated marketing and town centre presentation. **The Council will encourage coordinated town dressing during major events, working alongside local traders, businesses and community groups to create themed window displays, banners, decorations and promotional activity that celebrate events taking place in Ledbury and enhance the visitor experience.**

6. Delivery and Support

Ledbury Town Council will support events by:

- Providing organisational guidance and planning assistance, including the provision of an events checklist providing key management advice;
- Offering Grants / support
- Offering promotional support through the Council website, social media and Visit Herefordshire listings;
- Facilitating access to public spaces (e.g., St Katherines Square, Market House, Recreation Ground)
- Encouraging partnerships between event organisers, traders and community groups;
- Supporting event safety through local planning guidance and connections with the Safety Advisory Group.

7. Event Assessment Framework

- All proposed events (whether delivered by the Council or supported externally) will be considered using a shared checklist of guiding principles.
- Events will not be expected to satisfy every criterion; however, proposals should demonstrate how they meet the High priority criteria wherever reasonably practicable.

Criteria – the event...	High / Medium / Low
Encourages attendance from both residents and visitors	High
Minimises environmental impact and promotes sustainability (e.g., waste reduction, local suppliers, low-carbon operations)	Medium
Is enjoyable and engaging	High
Supports local businesses, suppliers or volunteer groups	High
Includes accessibility considerations consistent with events scale and expected attendance	High
Complements the Town Councils Corporate plan	Medium
Promotes community interaction and participation.	High
Offers learning, cultural, or educational opportunities;	Medium
Has potential for growth and new opportunities;	Medium

Publicises the Town of Ledbury externally as a place of community	High
Has sustainable financial planning (e.g., sponsorship or partnerships);	Medium
Uses multiple town spaces where appropriate.	Low
Opportunities for young people and families to take part;	High

8. Financial

Prior to the commencement of the new financial year, officers will prepare a comprehensive events budget to inform Members of the Council of the anticipated funding required to deliver the programme of events proposed by officers. In developing this budget, every effort will be made to secure external funding through sponsorship, grants, or other sources, thereby supporting the events programme while minimizing reliance on the Council's core resources.

Regular financial management reports will be presented to the Council in order to ensure effective financial controls are in place and being monitored.

9. Measures of Success

Attendance and other data for measuring success will be collected from all events as classified in Section 3.1 (District Events, Community Events, and Town Centre-linked Events). **Where possible**, each organiser will be asked to provide captured data for their events to support monitoring, evaluation, and strategic planning for future events.

Over the lifetime of this Strategy the Council will seek continuous improvement in the quality, reach and impact of its events programme. Whilst annual priorities may vary, success will be demonstrated through increased participation, stronger partnerships, improved visitor experience and greater external investment in events. Success for events in Ledbury will be measured through:

- **Attendance levels** – both residential and visitor engagement, supported by anonymised footfall data (e.g., mobile data provided through Herefordshire County BID data capture systems to give a clearer picture of event reach over time. Attendance will also be tracked via ticketing systems, sign-ins, or clickers where applicable. Herefordshire Council can also provide information on parking data and how many tickets were purchased compared to other days or the same event the previous year.

- **Visitor experience feedback** - will be collected through a range of methods, including on-site surveys, online questionnaires, QR codes, and feedback from partner organisations. Key areas of focus will include satisfaction, accessibility, and likelihood of return attendance. This aligns with standard Ledbury Town Council practice, utilising tools such as QR codes, surveys, and attendance records.

- **Economic impact** – assessed through local trade uplift, surveys of participating businesses, and overall footfall in the town centre during event periods.

- **Media and social engagement** – coverage in traditional media and online platforms, including tracking engagement on Facebook, Instagram, and other relevant channels. Metrics will include reach, likes, shares, comments, hashtag usage, and click-throughs to event pages to assess promotional effectiveness.

The Council will review these measures annually to identify trends, evaluate value for money and inform future investment decisions.

10. Implementation and Review

This Strategy will be reviewed every **year** to reflect changes in community needs, resources, town plans, and partner opportunities.

11. Governance

Overall responsibility for delivery of this Strategy rests with Ledbury Town Council. Operational delivery will be undertaken by officers, with strategic oversight provided through the Events Working Party and relevant Council Committees.

12. Action Plan

Action	Lead	Timescale	Success/ Measure
Produce and publish an annual coordinated events calendar, including Council, community and regional events.	Community Engagement Officer / Events Working Party		Calendar published and shared with partners.
Identify priority regional events (e.g. Malvern, Three Counties, Eastnor, Big Apple) that provide opportunities for town centre activation.	Community Engagement Officer / Events Working Party		Priority events agreed and incorporated into the annual programme.



Action	Lead	Timescale	Success/ Measure
Develop and implement the Event Assessment Framework using the High, Medium and Low priority criteria.	Community Engagement Officer / Events Working Party		Assessment framework approved and in use.
Introduce standard event evaluation forms and data collection methods to measure attendance, visitor satisfaction and economic impact.	Community Engagement Officer / Events Working Party		Evaluation framework adopted and used for all Council-led events.
Develop a coordinated marketing approach with local businesses, including themed window displays and town dressing for major events.	Community Engagement Officer / Local Businesses / Traders		Minimum of three coordinated campaigns delivered annually.
Publish the annual Ledbury Events Programme.	Town Council		Annual programme approved and publicly available.
Introduce Accessibility and Sustainability Checklists for all Council-led events.	Community Engagement Officer / Events Working Party		Checklists implemented and used during event planning.
Seek external funding and sponsorship opportunities to enhance the events programme.	Community Engagement Officer		Funding applications submitted and sponsorship secured where appropriate.
Monitor event performance against the Measures of Success and report findings to Members.	Community Engagement Officer		Annual evaluation report presented to Council.
Review the Events Strategy and supporting Implementation Plan.	Town Council	Annually	Strategy and Implementation Plan



Action	Lead	Timescale	Success/ Measure
			reviewed and updated where required.

This Action Plan identifies the initial priorities for delivering the Events Strategy. It will be supported by a detailed Implementation Plan, which will allocate responsibilities, identify resource requirements and monitor progress. The Action Plan and Implementation Plan will be reviewed annually to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the Council, its partners and the community.