

Annual Report



Ledbury Town Council

2025-2026





Contents

Chairman's Report	Page 1
Town Clerk's Report	Page 2
Chairman's Highlights	Pages 3-4
Finance Reports	Pages 5 - 9
Environment & Leisure Report	Page 10
Planning, Economy & Tourism Report	Pages 11-12
Our Green Spaces	Page 13
Painted Room Update	Page 14
Council Membership & Wards	Pages 15-16
Ledbury Grants & Sponsorship.....	Pages 17-18
Working in Partnership	Pages 19 - 20
Masefield Matters	Pages 21 - 24
Ledbury Events	Pages 25 - 27
Connect with Ledbury Town Council	Page 28



Chairman's Report

Welcome to the Ledbury Town Council Annual Report for the financial year 2025-2026.

This report aims to provide residents with an overview of the work of the council and to highlight some of the ways in which we have been supporting the life of the town over the last year. The report also includes examples of how the Town Council continues to advocate for the interests and concerns of local people to public bodies, businesses, community groups and other layers of government. As ever, it has been a busy year and there is much to recognise and celebrate.

In setting the direction and priorities for the council we continue to be informed by the wishes of our residents as expressed in our Corporate Plan and The Town Plan upon which it is based, and on planning matters by the Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan. These documents are available to view on our website (<https://www.ledburytowncouncil.gov.uk/en-gb>) and in hard copy at the Town Council Offices.

We welcome any questions or queries you may have regarding the work of the Town Council. Please contact us at our council offices in Church Lane or by phone: 01531 632306 or by email at: clerk@LedburyTownCouncil.gov.uk.

Elizabeth Harvey
Chairman 2025-2026



Town Clerk's Report

Throughout the year, the Council has maintained an active governance programme, with regular Full Council meetings supporting decision-making across finance, resources, events, and community services.

Community events and engagement have remained a key focus. The successful return of the full-scale Christmas Lights Switch-On in 2025 was welcomed, with Members reviewing delivery and agreeing improvements for 2026, including enhanced coordination and strengthened budget planning. The Council has also supported broader event development through the Events Working Party, progressing an events strategy and contributing to initiatives such as Great Big Green Week and wider cultural programming. The Council has maintained oversight of markets and local economic activity, holding regular meetings to support operations and explore development opportunities, including an antiques market.

Strong partnership working has continued, with engagement across organisations including the Masefield Matters project, Ledbury Community Hub (youth provision and grant funding), and the UK Town of Culture Expression of Interest. Collaboration has also extended to local groups such as Sheds Together and church representatives, supporting joint initiatives and community events.

Operational and corporate management has remained a priority, including budget monitoring and review, insurance renewal, staff matters, and consideration of future office accommodation. Training and governance support have been provided to staff and Councillors, reinforcing good practice. A staff and organisational review is underway to ensure resources align with sustained service delivery and statutory responsibilities.

The Council has continued responding to local issues and resident concerns, including engagement on road safety and site-specific improvements such as within the cemetery, and has supported Wellington Heath in progressing road safety plans through the Market Town Investment Fund.

Overall, the year demonstrates consistent delivery across events, partnerships, and operations. The Council remains committed to strengthening community engagement, supporting local initiatives, and ensuring effective, transparent governance.

Angela Price
Town Clerk



Chairman's Highlights



Throughout her municipal year, the Chairman has taken a fresh and inclusive approach to community engagement by moving away from the traditional model of supporting only one or two named charities. Instead, she has used her role to shine a spotlight on the many organisations, volunteers and initiatives that make Ledbury such a vibrant and caring town.

At the heart of the year has been a programme of monthly themes, each designed to celebrate a different aspect of community life. These have included Strong Community, Families and Young People, Heritage and Culture, Traditions, Wellbeing, Making and Mending, Walking and Cycling, and Wild Flowers Around Us. Through these themes, the Chairman has been able to recognise both long-established groups and newer initiatives, while encouraging residents to take part in local activities and events.

Particular emphasis has been placed on organisations that strengthen community spirit and support local wellbeing. Groups such as Ledbury Community Hub, Community Action Ledbury, Talk Community, Ledbury Warm Spaces and the Food Bank have all been highlighted for the important role they play in tackling loneliness, supporting vulnerable residents and bringing people together.



Ledbury Community Hub at Oatley's Meadow

Ledbury Community Hub



The Chairman has also championed Ledbury's rich cultural and heritage life. During the summer months, attention was given to the Poetry Festival, Fringe events, local theatre and music, while autumn focused on Heritage Open Days, the Civic Society, Friends of The Master's House, Sustainable Ledbury, the Allotment Association and other groups helping to preserve and shape the town's identity.

Young people and families have remained a key priority throughout the year. Local youth groups, holiday activities, children's services and family organisations have all been recognised for the opportunities they provide for learning, play and social connection.

Environmental themes have also featured strongly. From promoting walking and cycling to encouraging appreciation of local wildlife, wildflowers and trees, the Chairman has used her platform to support greener lifestyles and celebrate the natural environment that surrounds Ledbury.

One of the most visible examples of this approach has been the "Big Up the Community" message seen throughout the year. This theme has encouraged residents to celebrate the people, groups and volunteers whose dedication helps make Ledbury a welcoming, active and resilient town.

By focusing on awareness, encouragement and recognition, the Chairman has helped strengthen connections across the community and ensured that the valuable work of local organisations is both seen and celebrated.

Finance, Policy and General Purposes

This report presents the financial position of Ledbury Town Council for the year ending 31 March 2026, based on the Month 12 outturn figures.

Cost Centre	Income	Expenditure	Includes:
Closed Churchyard		£9,081	Grounds maintenance; tree works
Cemetery and Buildings	£17,426	£28,181	contractors and maintenance
Grounds maintenance		£38,508	Staff salaries
Painted Room	£20,319	£38,058	Staff salaries
Bye Street Toilets		£1,945	
Town Promotion		£7,208	Guides and maps; signage
Amenity Areas		£13,916	Dog Hill Wood
Recreation Ground		£23,832	Maintenance/play equipment/skate park
Town Centre Decorations		£21,814	Christmas lights; Ledbury in Bloom
Minor Infrastructure	£1,667	£17,928	CCTV; defibrillator maintenance
Non stat services	£6,383	£489	Ceremony Room inc. weddings
Green Spaces	£1,680	£2,945	Lengthsman scheme
Services and Events	£3,319	£13,339	
Market House	£1,722	£6,669	
Town Council Offices	£190	£52,679	Services; maintenance
Civic Matters		£1,680	
Grants	£2,500	£65,357	
Finance Policy & General Purposes	£744,498	£51,050	Bank Interest; Precept;
Newsletter and Expenses		£2,015	
Management and Payroll	£500	£344,129	Apprentice income
Office Facilities & Equipment	£684	£12,482	
Planning/Economic Development	£6,968	£1,287	
Full Council		£40,749	Telephone & ICT Services
Totals	£807,857	£795,341	



In Summary:

	INCOME	EXPENDITURE
Buildings and Grounds	£41,147	£163,135
Staff and Services	£16,392	£473,438
Events	£3,224	£42,361
Grants	£2,500	£65,357
Finance (Precept)	£744,498	£51,050
TOTALS (excluding MM project)	£807,857	£795,341

Masefield Matters Project	£2,375	£102,754
TOTALS (including MM project)	£810,232	£898,095

Debtors	£2,508	
Vat Due	£9,688	
Stock	£1,728	
Lloyds A/c (235) (Bus Ext)	£21,193	
Premier A/c (736) Comm Call	£69,161	
Public Sector Deposit Fund	£178,048	
Petty Cash	£150	
Total Current Assets		£282,474
Current Liabilities		
Creditors	£12,112	
Net Current Assets		£270,362

Total Assets less Current Liabilities

Current Year fund	-£92,964
General Fund	£221,694
EMR - Listed Buildings	£104,043
EMR - Advertising	£5,000
EMR - Amenity and Public Spaces	£15,404
EMR - Community Projects	£12,185
EMR - Vehicle Refurb	£5,000

Total Equity	£270,362
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The Masefield Matters project represents a major one-off project, supported by significant external funding including a National Lottery Heritage Fund grant of £111,110 part-awarded in the financial year 2024/2025.

The Council has covered all operational costs; stayed within overall income; delivered planned services; and agreed projects. It has finished the year with a modest surplus to further provide financial resilience and make a further net contribution to ear-marked reserves (EMR) and general reserves (GR).

Councillor Hughes
Deputy Chairman & Chair of Finance,
Policy & General Purposes

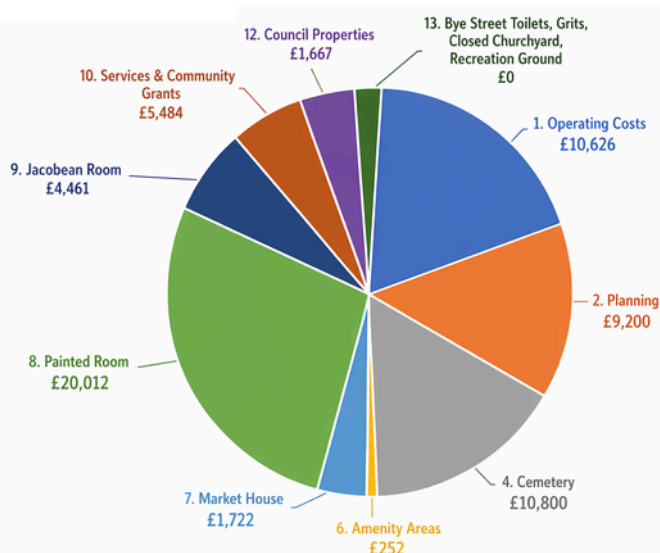


The work of the Council continues to be funded primarily through the mechanism of the Parish Precept. The Parish Precept is collected on behalf of the parish by the County Council through residents' monthly Council Tax payments. This year, it represented £3.82 a week for a Band D property.

The largest areas of spend and therefore the core cost base of the Council is Management & Payroll £344,129 Grants £65,357 Town Council Offices: £52,679 Finance & General Purposes: £51,050 and Full Council: £40,749. Full Council and F&GP costs relate mostly to maintaining and insuring the council's property assets. Spending is spread across many services but there are just a few large categories of spending that dominate the accounts. Staffing is clearly the biggest cost driver but our staff support and enable all frontline service delivery.

Over the last year the Council has continued to consolidate and to focus its grant funding of community organisations and events across three broad categories: Community; Older People; and Younger People. We provide a number of groups with multi-year grants to help them with their own financial planning and to develop sustainable operating models. The Council also encourages grant recipients to work more closely with one another to further strengthen and increase the community value delivered in part through the Council's encouragement and support.

TOTAL INCOME £64,224 (EXCLUDING PRECEPT)

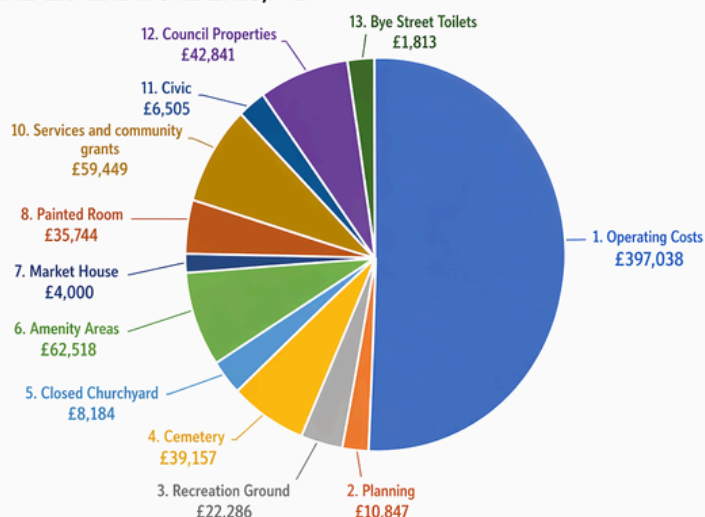


This year the Council has also been operating the Bye Street public toilets belonging to Herefordshire Council in partnership with a local community group. We also provided additional grass cutting of the Walled Garden and Queen's Walk park areas also owned by Herefordshire Council to maintain them as attractive parks for local people to enjoy. The Council also provides core community services of Grounds Maintenance, including the Cemetery, Recreation Ground and amenity areas such as Dog Hill Wood. Spending also promotes the Town as a visitor-destination and represents direct investment in the town's quality of life and economic resilience.

**PRECEPT
(Council Tax Funding)
£734,622**



TOTAL EXPENDITURE £728,741



Income generating areas of the budget include the Cemetery & Buildings; the Painted Room; the Wedding Ceremony room; Market House and Charter Market areas. These assets offset costs but do not fully fund themselves. Our financial strengths are that we have delivered a year-end surplus, maintained a full service provision, controlled overall expenditure and continued investment in community priorities. We remain focused on maintaining sustainable finances going forward. Our financial position is sound and stable and our reserves are considered reasonable and prudent by our auditors.

Budget Responsibility for Each Committee

The proportion of the council's total budget overseen by each committee.

The proportion of the Council's total budget overseen by each committee varies significantly, with the committees collectively overseeing a total budget of £898,099.

Despite this variation in budget share, the workload of each committee is broadly similar, as not all council work involves direct spending. In addition, most of the council's work across all three committees is delivered by staff, while overall responsibility for staff costs remains with the Finance Committee.

Finance Policy & General Purposes



Employees (£420,636)

This covers staff costs to ensure services are delivered effectively and residents receive the support they need.



Grants (£65,250)

Funding provided financial support to local groups and organisations, helping deliver projects and services within the community.



Services & Support (£174,614)

This supports the overall running of services, including management, planning, and administrative functions.

Planning, Economy & Tourism



Planning, Economy & Tourism (£26,403)

Covering areas related to planning and economic development for the town, including initiatives that support growth, development, and the local economy.

Environment & Leisure



Events & Services (£49,087)

Supporting a range of community events and activities, helping bring families together and provide enjoyable, inclusive experiences for residents.



Heritage Buildings (£85,112)

This covered the running of council offices, ensuring residents can access services and support in a safe and efficient environment.



Cemeteries (£37,263)

Funding ensured cemeteries are well maintained, providing respectful and peaceful spaces for remembrance.



Amenities & Open Spaces (£39,734)

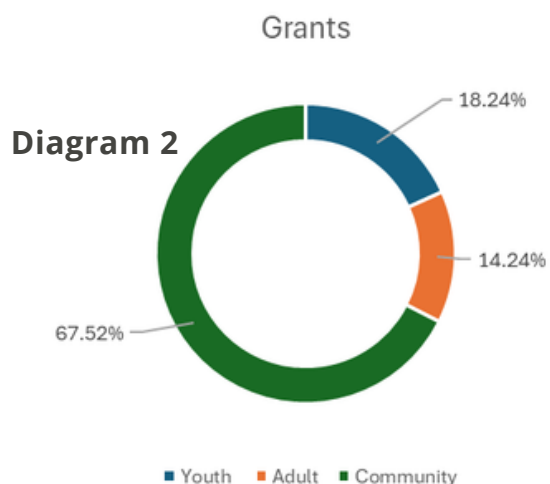
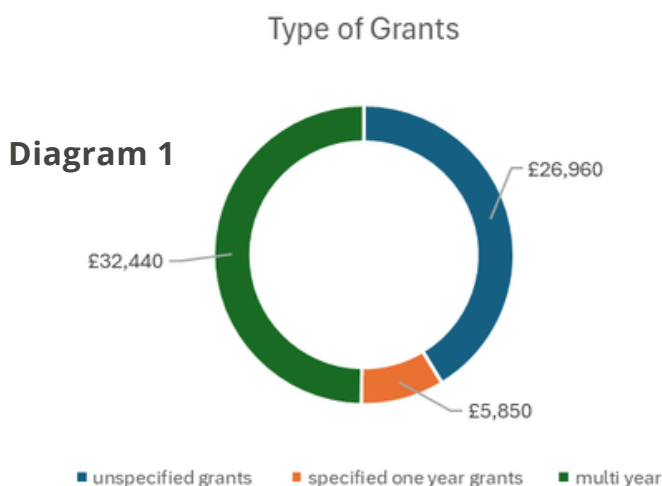
Spending helped maintain parks and public spaces, keeping them clean, safe, and welcoming for everyone to enjoy.

Breakdown of Council Grant Awards Allocation

Diagram 1 illustrates how the Council's grant funding has been allocated, distinguishing between multi-year grants, specified one-year grants, and unspecified grants. Diagram 2 shows who has benefited from this funding, highlighting whether the support is directed towards older people, younger people, or the community as a whole.

The Council spends more than £65,000 (7.27% of its total budget) on providing grants to local groups and organisations to support their work within the community. These grants fund a wide range of activities aimed at supporting older people, younger people, and the wider community.

The funding for this year has been distributed across these activity types, as shown in the pie chart.



During 2025/26, the Environment & Leisure Committee did not hold formal meetings due to the reduced number of Councillors. However, its business has continued to be delivered through Full Council meetings. Over the past 12 months, the Committee has overseen the management, maintenance, and enhancement of green spaces and community facilities across Ledbury. Ledbury Town Council is also working with the Community Hub, who will be undertaking general maintenance of Dog Hill Wood.

Significant tree works have been undertaken across the town, including coppicing and felling at Biddulph Way, Jubilee Way and Ledbury Cemetery, alongside ongoing tree management to ensure public safety and long-term maintenance of key sites. An oak sapling, to mark the anniversary of the end of World War II and to commemorate VE Day, together with a Japanese cherry tree to commemorate VJ Day, will later this year be planted at the Recreation Ground. The Foamstream machine has been used across the town as an alternative method of weed control.

At the Recreation Ground, the Committee approved the installation of new play equipment, including a tyre swing, hopscotch, and logweave, with pupils from Ledbury Primary School assisting in aspects of the installation.

At the cemetery, works have included the installation of oak bollards, with further works planned for repointing, a new footpath, the extension of burial plot provision, a new scatter garden, alongside ongoing maintenance to ensure the site remains safe, respectful and well maintained. Maintenance works have also been undertaken at the Market House and Council Offices, with plans in place to repaint the Market House staircase to improve access to the upper floor, enabling greater use by community groups including Strömstad, the Carnival and HMS Ledbury.

The Council installed two new defibrillators at The Langlands and Bridge Street, supported by emergency bleed packs kindly donated by The Inner Wheel Club of Malvern. West Midlands Railway has confirmed plans for the installation of a defibrillator at the Railway Station, and the Council are looking for a further defibrillator to be installed along Martins Way/Biddulph Way.

Further work has included improvements to footpaths such as Cabbage Lane and the footpath behind the Walled Garden, as well as the installation of memorial benches at New Street Cemetery and the Recreation Ground.

Councillor Chowns
Chair of Environment & Leisure Committee





During 2025/26 the Planning, Economy & Tourism Committee has not held meetings due to the reduced numbers of Councillors. However, the business of this committee has continued as part of the agenda of Full Council meetings. During the past twelve months the following business has been dealt with:

Planning and Licensing Activity

Since May 2025, the Council has considered and commented on a total of 72 planning consultations and 7 licensing applications, with comments resolved at Full Council meetings. These have included:

- Forest of Dean District Council Local Plan 2025–2045 (Regulation 18 Consultation). A draft response was prepared for consideration at the Full Council meeting held on 12 March 2026. A key part of this response related to the Glynchbrooke proposal, which is for a new town of 3,500 homes near Redmarley.
- Leadon House Hotel – Proposed Planning Application. Correspondence from Green Away Planning was reviewed, and feedback was provided to inform a Full Council discussion.
- Lidl Planning Application (including additional buildings on site) A draft response was prepared to support Full Council’s consideration of the original application for an out-of-town supermarket, Nursery and healthcare Centre and the subsequent resubmitted application following the original approval being quashed in the High Court for procedural reasons.

S106 Projects

Creation of pump track – S106 money has been made available for the introduction of a pump track in Ledbury and we are working in partnership with Herefordshire Council to build a pump track on the Playing fields at Martin’s Way. We have submitted an Expression of Interest for a Community Asset Transfer of the pump track on completion. A pump track is a continuous circuit of dirt, asphalt, or concrete featuring rollers (small hills) and berms (banked turns) designed to be ridden without pedalling.





Oatley's Meadow – S106 funds have also been made available to support a project at Oatley's Meadow, which is being led by the Community Hub. Volunteers have been supported by Ledbury Community Hub in creating a nature-rich, people focused park, that's cared for and maintained by the community, for the community. Daffodils have been planted and work will soon begin on creating living willow domes and tree planting.

Other Planning-Related Matters Considered

In addition to statutory planning consultations, the Council has considered a range of related issues, including:

- Supporting the installation of speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) in Wellington Heath via funding from the Market Town Improvement fund
- Engagement with the Hereford and Gloucester Canal Trust
- Section 106 (S106) matters
- Works to trees in the Conservation Area and those protected by Tree Preservation Orders
- Road closure requests
- Parish boundary considerations – see more detail at page 16 of this report
- Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) submission regarding Southend/Mabel's Furlong parking

Tourism, Events & Markets Action Plan (TEMAP)

In May 2025 the Council received funding which enabled the commissioning of a Feasibility Study into how we can improve our Tourism, Events and Markets offerings in Ledbury. One suggestion is to improve and expand the range of markets held in the town and to make better use of the Market House and St Katherine's Square off-road areas for traders. This would enable the majority of the High Street market trading area to be returned to free car parking 7 days a week.

Discussions are also being held in respect of alternative locations within the town for the Council offices and the Tourist Information Centre and it is intended that there will be progress on this in 2026/27.

The Masefield Matters project has gathered momentum in 2025/26 thanks to the dedicated team of staff and Board Members, more detail in respect of this is available on page 21.

Councillor Morris
Chair of Planning, Economy & Tourism



Our Green Spaces

Over the past 12 months, Ledbury Town Council has continued to invest in the upkeep and enhancement of its green spaces, ensuring they remain welcoming, safe, and accessible for both residents and visitors. Regular maintenance programmes have been carried out across parks, open spaces and play areas, including grass cutting, seasonal planting and a range of tree management works. Notably, this has included targeted tree works at Biddulph Way to improve safety, support tree health and promote the long-term sustainability of these important green areas.

Further work has also been undertaken by the lengthsman to address areas highlighted by members of the public, helping to ensure community concerns are responded to promptly and effectively.

In 2019 Leominster Council gifted an Oak sapling grown from an acorn from a tree grown in Leominster, from an acorn bought back from The Somme at the end of World War 1. The Oak Sapling carries a remarkable lineage of remembrance and resilience and Leominster Council wanted to share this legacy with the Herefordshire Towns allowing the story to continue to grow in new communities. This sapling, along with a Japanese Cherry Blossom tree, provided through the Sakura Cherry Tree Project, will be planted in the town in the autumn 2026 as a symbol of 80 years of peace since the end of the Second World War. The oak will commemorate VE Day, while the cherry blossom will honour VJ Day—together standing as living memorials to peace, remembrance, and international friendship for generations to come.

The Council has also worked in partnership with local community groups and volunteers to support environmental initiatives and the care of shared spaces. This has included collaborative litter-picking events, ongoing improvements to footpaths such as Cabbage Lane and the route behind the Walled Garden, enhancements to seating areas, and efforts to promote the sustainable use of green spaces.

The Council is pleased to report strong collaboration with organisations including Sustainable Ledbury and the Community Hub, particularly in relation to the Town Trail and Dog Hill Wood, and its connection to The King's Trust Rural Crafts Project.

Julia Lawrence
Deputy Clerk



Painted Room Update

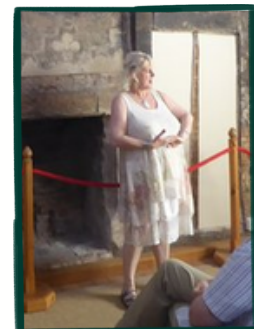
We started 2025 with a grant funded art project, including an artist in residence and a series of art workshops, all based on the designs in the Painted Room. This gave us an immediate boost to our yearly figures as we were open for longer hours than normal in March. We also created several new displays for both the Painted Room and the Market House. In May we started to open the Market House regularly for a couple of hours in the afternoons, rather than just taking visitors up on request. This has been a great success, and our visitor numbers have greatly increased as a result.

Visitor numbers exceeded last year in both venues, the Painted Room having a total of 7675 and the Market House 2600. Sales and donations also increased accordingly. In September, we created some new displays for Heritage Days, which are regarding the construction of timber framed buildings in general and in Ledbury in particular. These are now part of the permanent display in the Market House.

Looking at the visitor numbers for March last year, it was decided to try opening on Saturdays in March 2026 as well as Monday to Thursday. These seem to have gone well. To balance out these additional hours, we have reduced our staff coverage a little during the early part of the season so currently have only one guide in the morning and two in the afternoon. This is allowing us to still open the Market House in the afternoon. We will not be open on Sundays until June, except on Bank Holiday weekends. Little Strömstad has now moved into the Market House from The Talbot Hotel, so there are more displays for our visitors to see here. Plans are also afoot to make improvements to the existing HMS Ledbury display.

March figures were good for the Painted Room and the Market House, with one Saturday exceeding all previous daily totals. We look forward to a busy season.

Beth Hughes
Tour Guide Manager



Council Membership & Wards

Ledbury Town Council is made up of 18 Councillors, with six representing each of the three wards (North, South and West), which comprise the parish. Councillors represent the interests of the community and work collectively to make decisions for the benefit of the town. Councillors are elected to serve residents and play a key role in shaping local services, facilities and initiatives. At present, there are 11 serving members, with seven vacancies.

We would like to formally record our thanks to the Councillors who have stepped down during the year. Councillors Coleman and Sinclair—we are grateful for their dedication, commitment and the time they have given in service to the community.

NORTH



**Councillor Harvey
(Chairman)**



**Councillor
Bradford**



**Councillor
Chowns**



**Councillor
Hamblin**

WEST



Councillor Kettle



**Councillor
Browning**



**Councillor
Troy**

SOUTH



**Councillor
Eakin**



**Councillor
Wilkinson**



**Councillor
Morris**



**Councillor
Hughes**

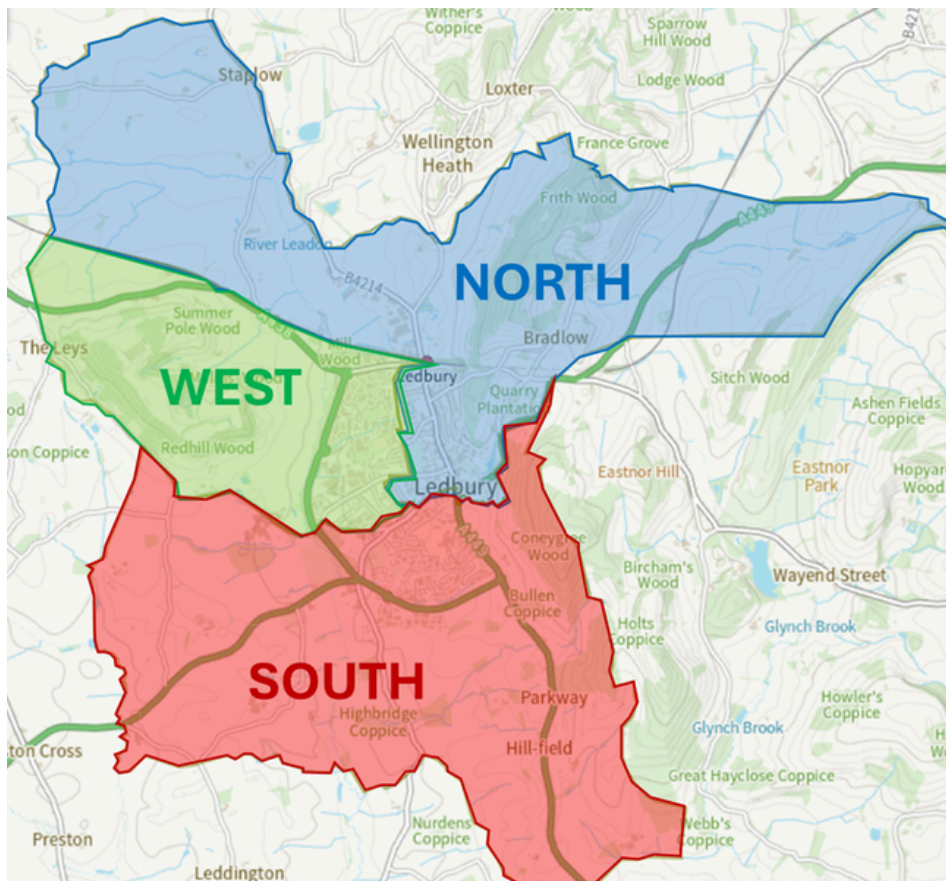
Changes to your Ward

During this year, the Council considered and supported proposed changes to the ward boundaries within Ledbury as part of a wider Boundary Commission review. These changes are intended to better balance the number of electors across the North, South, and West wards as the town continues to grow.

The proposals include adjusting the boundaries of the North and South wards to follow clearer, more defined physical features within the town, such as roads, the river, and the former railway route. The adjusted ward boundaries follow the route of the disused railway/canal route through town to the bridge over the railway line on Woodleigh Road, and then follow the route of New Street down to the Full Pitcher Roundabout on Leadon Way, along Ross Road to where the road crosses the River Leadon. From there, the ward boundary then follows the route of the river south to the parish boundary.

As part of these changes, a number of roads and residential areas will move into the West ward, increasing its electorate while slightly reducing the numbers in the North and South wards. Roads transferred from North to West include Long Acres East, Orchard Rise, Bridge Street South, Queens Court, and Woodleigh Road. Roads transferred from South to West include the North side of New Street going south from Woodleigh Road, Little Marcle Road, Canal Walk, Elgar Close, Leadon Place, Ross Road, Orlam Lane, Lilly Hall Lane, and Rowlands Green.

Overall, these changes aim to ensure fairer representation for residents and create ward boundaries that are easier to understand. The agreed proposal has been submitted to the Boundary Commission as part of the public consultation process.



Ledbury Grants & Sponsorship



Total
£65,250

Ledbury Town Council is committed to supporting local organisations, charities, and community groups through its grants programme. Each year, the Council allocates funding to assist projects and initiatives that benefit the town and enhance the wellbeing of residents. Grants are awarded to a wide range of organisations, including voluntary groups, community associations, and local charities. Funding supports activities such as community events, environmental improvements, youth initiatives, cultural projects, and services for vulnerable residents.

During the year, the Council has continued to prioritise funding for projects that deliver clear community benefit, encourage local participation, and contribute positively to the character and vibrancy of Ledbury. This includes the Council's decision in December 2025 to support the Ledbury Community Hub through funding towards a dedicated Youth Worker role. This investment will strengthen and coordinate a growing programme of youth activities, including civic engagement initiatives, creative and digital skills development, and physical activity sessions, while also supporting early-intervention work with younger children. The initiative reflects the Council's commitment to addressing rural isolation, improving wellbeing, and ensuring that young people have access to sustained, high-quality opportunities and support as they develop.

All grant applications are carefully considered to ensure that public funds are used responsibly and effectively. The Council aims to support initiatives that are inclusive, sustainable, and aligned with local priorities. Below are the organisations we have supported during the year:

One off Grants - Unspecified 2025-2026

- Ledbury Swifts
- Catcher Media
- VE Day Grants
- Ledbury & District U3A
- Ledbury Fringe
- Ledbury Food Group
- Sustainable Ledbury
- Ledbury Primary School
- Ledbury & Strömstad Twinning Association
- Ledbury Walk & Talk
- Royal British Legion

- Ledbury Brass Band
- The Malverns District Scouts
- Ledbury Community Hub
- Ledbury Places
- Ledbury Poetry Festival

Multi Year Applications 2025-2026

- Ledbury Food Bank
- Dream your Future Families
- Ledbury Methodist Church
- Community Action Ledbury
- LEAF
- Ledbury Carnival



Ledbury Town Council delivers events that benefit both residents and local businesses. Our free community projects include family and educational activities, made possible through the support of local talent, organisations, and community groups, helping to keep Ledbury vibrant, healthy, and united.

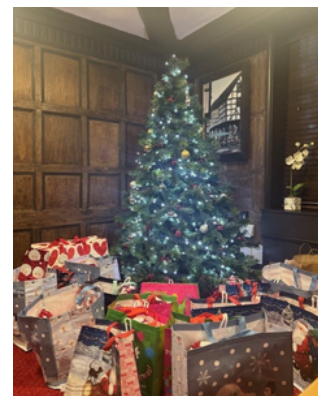
We offer a range of sponsorship opportunities for businesses and organisations wishing to raise their profile or support the town.

For more information, please contact ceo@ledburytowncouncil.gov.uk

Ledbury Town Council thanks all local businesses who generously contributed towards Christmas gifts for children whose families may benefit from additional support during the festive season.

Now in its fourth year, this initiative supports children's gifts and the Christmas Lights Switch-On Event, providing free entertainment for families across the town. We are once again grateful for the generosity of our local business community.

This year's sponsors donated a total of £1,650, with contributions from Eastnor Castle, Grant & Co, Jaga Climate Designs, Redkite Solicitors, Sequani, The Uncommon Touch, ABE Ledbury, Hellen's Manor, Amcor, Westons Cider, and The Army and Outdoor Store. All donations go directly towards gifts for local children and supporting free festive activities.



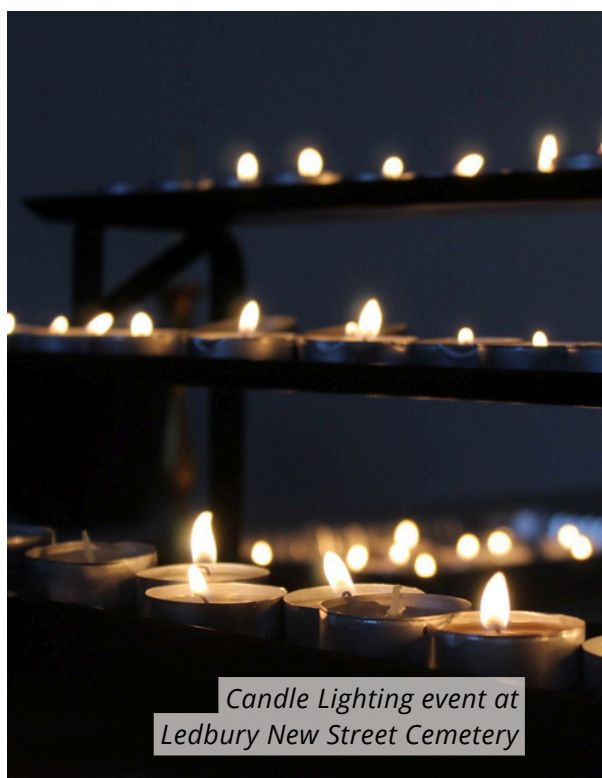
Working in Partnership

Ledbury Town Council continues to place strong emphasis on building meaningful connections within the community and fostering partnerships that enhance the social, cultural, and economic wellbeing of the town.

Over the past year, we have strengthened our relationships with Ledbury schools, working collaboratively to encourage civic engagement from an early age. For example, our work with Ledbury Primary School has focused on building connections with the Children's Ambassadors, providing a valuable platform for young people to share their perspectives, contribute ideas, and feel actively involved in their community. This approach has helped nurture a sense of pride and responsibility among the town's younger residents.

We have also continued to support and collaborate on a range of community events that bring people together. This includes our partnership with Ledbury Community Day, which provides an opportunity for local organisations, groups, and residents to connect, celebrate, and showcase the wide range of activities and services available within the town.

As part of the Ledbury Celebration, the Town Council also partnered with the Ledbury Food Group to host a special event at the conclusion of the Poetry Festival. This celebration highlighted the richness of local produce and crafts, showcasing the talents and contributions of local producers, artisans, and makers. The event not only celebrated Ledbury's unique cultural identity but also reinforced the importance of supporting local businesses and sustainable practices.



*Candle Lighting event at
Ledbury New Street Cemetery*

In addition to community groups, the Town Council values its partnerships with local businesses. This includes working with Co-op Funeralcare to host an annual candle lighting event at the chapel on New Street. Each year, this well-attended event welcomes over 100 visitors in the lead-up to Christmas, providing a space for people to remember loved ones, light a candle, and come together in a warm and supportive environment with refreshments and companionship.

Through these partnerships and initiatives, Ledbury Town Council remains committed to strengthening community ties, promoting inclusivity, and creating opportunities for residents of all ages to participate in and contribute to the life of the town.



Ledbury Primary School Ambassadors helping install new play equipment at the Recreation Ground

Update from Ledbury Primary School

“As a school at the heart of our community, we place great importance on ensuring our children feel connected, involved, and valued within Ledbury. Our Children’s Ambassadors embody this through their work at local events, supporting projects at the recreation ground, contributing to plans for new park equipment, and attending a range of civic events throughout the year.”

We were also delighted to welcome local families into our nursery during World Bookfest, opening our doors to the wider community and leading engaging, book-based activities for children and families to enjoy.

The Ambassadors have built meaningful links with the wider community through their work with the local nursing home, attending events such as Christmas celebrations with residents and the opening of their new building. Their involvement extends further to civic events, including assisting judges at the summer carnival float competition and working alongside councillors on community day, where they engaged with local businesses and charities to explore opportunities for the children of Ledbury.

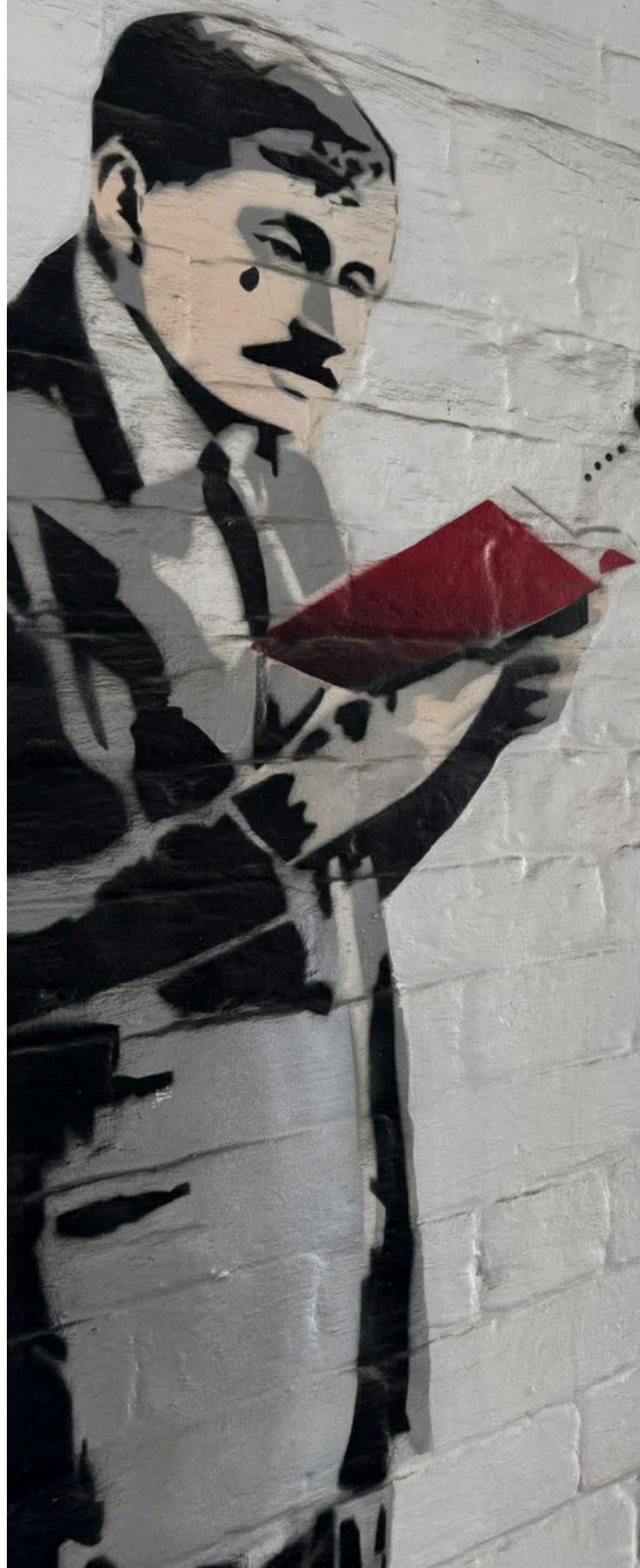
Through all of this, our Children’s Ambassadors have become a vital link between the school and the wider community - championing pupil voice and representing the children of Ledbury with pride. This work is a priority for us because strong community connections are fundamental to who we are.”

Message from the Deputy Headteacher at Ledbury Primary School. Mrs Charlotte Slocombe



Ledbury Primary School Ambassadors with Councillor Hughes





*"I must go down to the
seas again, to the lonely
sea and the sky, and all
I ask is a tall ship and a
star to steer her by"*

*John Masefield
'Sea-Fever'*

Masefield Matters

Masefield Matters is a project run by Ledbury Town Council to celebrate the life and works of former Poet Laureate John Masefield, who was born in the town in 1878. The project aims to involve the local community with a range of events highlighting the importance of Masefield's connection with the town. In 2024, Masefield Matters received a £220,000 grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, and this year received a £7,000 grant from the Herefordshire BID. Thanks to this grant and the generous donations of individuals, we have now reached our match funding requirements. The project is run by the Masefield Matters Board and Emma, the Project Co-ordinator.

Over the last year, Masefield Matters has run 23 events, including engagement events with the community, consultation events, and fundraisers. Over 1500 people in and around Ledbury have been engaged with our activities so far.

One of the key outputs of the Masefield Matters Project is to create a memorial to John Masefield in Ledbury. The form this memorial takes is being chosen by the local community so that it best represents what John Masefield means to them. From September 2025 to March 2026, we have been collecting ideas for the memorial via survey. These ideas are currently being narrowed down to a single concept by our Board and the core consultation group. This group is made up of representatives from different groups and communities in Ledbury. Once the final form of the memorial is decided, three artists will be commissioned to produce designs. One of these designs will then be selected and the memorial commissioned. The completed memorial will then be unveiled on the 150th anniversary of John Masefield's birth in June 2028.

We are currently continuing with our programme of community events, with upcoming activities including further work with John Masefield High School and Ledbury Refugee Support Group. We will also move into the commissioning phase of the project and will soon be finalising the form the memorial takes.



Emma Clowsley
Project Co-ordinator

Emma Clowsley

Project Co-ordinator - Masefield Matters

Ledbury Town Council

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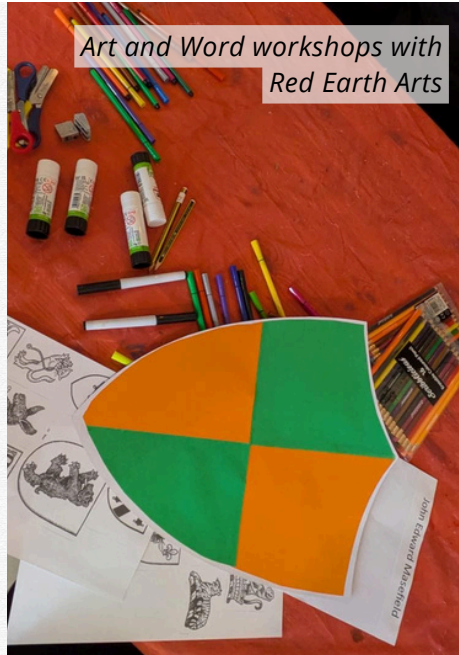
VISIT **HEREFORDSHIRE**

brought to you by  Herefordshire
County BID





Dance workshops with 2Faced Dance and Herefordshire Wildlife Trust



Art and Word workshops with Red Earth Arts



A day in the woods with Ledbury Refugee Support



Climbing the rigging at Cutty Sark with John Masefield High School



Visiting other Memorials at Cardiff Bay



Jonny Fluffypunk at Ledbury Christmas Light Switch-On



Research at the John Masefield Society Archive



Greenwood carving in Childer Wood with LEAF youth group



Art and reminiscence in local care homes



Performing Masefield's poems at Masefield Matters Community Celebration

Ledbury Events

This year, we delivered a lively programme of events that celebrate Ledbury and bring people together. By working closely with local schools, community groups, and businesses, we have created opportunities for connection, creativity, and shared experiences, while also supporting the town centre and encouraging increased footfall for local traders.

We supported and/or delivered ten events throughout the year, almost one every month, showcasing Ledbury's culture, heritage, and community spirit. Highlights included Ledbury World Bookfest, which featured hands-on creative workshops delivered by Aardman, immersive experiences during Heritage Open Days, and a vibrant Christmas Market that drew visitors from near and far, providing a valuable boost to local businesses.

These events are carefully planned and coordinated through a dedicated Events Working Party, which meets monthly. A committed group of members and partners give their time to shape the programme, and a significant amount of work goes on behind the scenes to ensure each event is delivered successfully and continues to improve year on year.

Feedback from families, schools, and participants has been overwhelmingly positive. Many have noted that events are attracting visitors from neighbouring towns, with families making use of the Daffodil Line to travel into Ledbury. Feedback frequently highlights the accessibility, inclusivity, and quality of activities, as well as the strong sense of pride these events create within the community.

Alongside our events, our enhanced online events calendar has become a key community tool, helping local organisations and businesses promote activities, increase visibility, and strengthen engagement across Ledbury and beyond. We also work in partnership with Visit Herefordshire to promote events more widely, extending their reach to regional audiences. We are now exploring closer collaboration with other event organisers in and around Ledbury to ensure a more coordinated and cohesive programme that continues to strengthen the town's offer and enhance the overall visitor and community experience.

Olivia Trueman
Community Engagement Officer





Winter Fairy at Ledbury Christmas Light Switch-On



Aardman Workshop for Ledbury World Bookfest



'Whale of a time' at Ledbury Great Big Green Week / Community Day



Ledbury Celebration 2025



Best Dressed at Ledbury World Bookfest 2026, pictured with the winner alongside Councillor Harvey and Lee Martin of Lakefest.



Heritage Open Days



Late Night Shopping - supporting the traders



Ledbury World Bookfest! Peter Rabbit comes to Ledbury



Ledbury Antique and Vintage Market



Ledbury Mop Fair - an old but welcomed tradition

Connect with Ledbury Town Council

If you have any questions about the annual report or would like any further information, please don't hesitate to get in touch with our office. We are always happy to help and welcome all enquiries.

We also greatly value your feedback and suggestions, as they help us to continue improving the services we provide to the community. Our dedicated team is on hand to assist with any questions you may have, whether they relate to our services, ongoing programmes, or wider community initiatives.

Ledbury Town Council has a team of 13 dedicated members of staff who work across different areas to support the local community. The people shown in this photo are the core office team, who you'll usually find in the main office on Church Lane. They help keep everything running smoothly day to day, assist residents with enquiries, and make sure council services are delivered efficiently.



Meet our Team



If our work throughout the year has inspired you and you're curious about becoming a Councillor, we'd love to hear from you! Serving as a Councillor is a rewarding way to make a difference in our community, and we're here to provide you with all the information and support you need to get started.

Please feel free to contact us at the office for more information on how you can get involved.

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Wild_about_ledbury



Ledbury Town Council

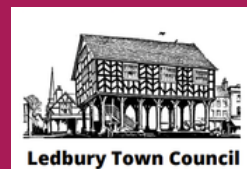


Scan here for our website





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Ledbury Town Council