



St Clears Town Council Cyngor Tref Sanclêr

Annual Report 2024/25

Cyngor Tref Sanclêr / St Clears Town Council

Y Gât, Pentre Road, St Clears, Carmarthenshire, SA33 4AA

www.stclearstowncouncil.co.uk

Tel. No.: 07468456077

e-mail: clerk@stclearstowncouncil.co.uk



Contents

Foreword (a word from the Town Mayor).

Chapter 1: An Overview

St Clears Town

Functions of the Town Council

Who is who on the Council?

Council Meetings and Committees

Chapter 2: Finance

Financial Planning, Setting the Budget & Income 2024/25

Expenditure 2024/25

Reserves

Grants

Financial Controls & Audit

Chapter 3: Services & Current Projects

Ten Towns

Y Gât

Welfare field

Youth Provision

Chapter 4: Events & Activities

Christmas event, St Davids Day, Y Gât, other

Chapter 5: Future Projects



Foreword

A word from the Mayor,

The 2024/2025 fiscal year was a very productive one for St. Clears Town Council with many on-going projects coming to fruition, funded by Carmarthenshire County Council grants, and a great deal of community activities undertaken. This report endeavours to outline the main events; the future projects earmarked for the coming year and includes a summary of the events attended as Town Mayor.

The Town Council was successful in its application for the Carmarthenshire County Council Ten Towns grant as St. Clears was ear-marked as one of the Ten Towns. This entailed a great deal of additional work undertaken by the clerk and it is due to her commitment and competence that this was achieved. A summary of all works undertaken had to be submitted showing evidence of the proposed outcomes, thus ensuring the payment. The investment made in Y Gât, which includes the painting of the building, new furniture and equipment, -indoor and outdoor, the re-configuration of the layout of the building, the digital screens, employing a Facilitator and support for Capital activity totals £77,465.76. The revenue grant totalled £3175.02.

Rebecca Polsen has been appointed in this role and is ensuring the success of Y Gât in becoming a welcoming and lively community hub offering varied activities to attract a wide range of ages and interests. There is also a vibrant and successful cafe in place which enriches everyone's experience when visiting Y Gât, thanks to Naomi Malpeli-Thornton of Curiositea Café.



One of the most spectacular additions to the town has been the mural by the artist Steve Jenkins (Jenks Art) on the wall of Rebecca House, the chemist. After a community consultation with the artist, this mural was produced and has become the focal point along Pentre Road, featuring many historical aspects of the town and its heritage.

The Ten Towns programme has provided many other opportunities in the area. Businesses have also benefitted from funding to enhance their

frontages which in turn lifts the vibrancy and appeal of St. Clears. A total of eleven businesses were approved funding with investment in this area of more than £20,000. Small scale enhancements have been made to Pentre Road Car Park with new accessible street furniture and screening of the recycling area. New bus shelters will also be installed over the next few months in Pentre Road. Railings and lamp posts along Pentre Road have also been given a coat of paint, ensuring that the whole area has been spruced up. To keep up the town's appearance, a team of workmen, Tîm Tacluso, will visit the town offering to do tidying up jobs every ten weeks. St. Clears has benefitted enormously from a huge investment as part of the Ten Towns programme, and the results are now clearly visible. It has been a pleasure to work with Carmarthenshire County Council to achieve all of this. Grateful thanks to the clerk working in conjunction with the Rural Programme Co-ordinator, Mared Pemberton.

Grateful thanks to councillors, past and present, who formed a subcommittee to finalise the work involved, working throughout the summer recess to ensure that deadlines were met. Without their dedication and commitment, this would not have been achieved! The council and the town is indebted to you all. CCC has invested heavily in St. Clears as one of the Ten Towns, and I'm sure that you all agree, the town's appearance has dramatically improved to become a vibrant, colourful town that visitors want to visit and of which the residents are proud.

Ysgol Griffith Jones pupils have had the opportunity to create a sculpture depicting the town's culture and heritage, working alongside other organisations such as the Men's Shed. This sculpture was created by the artist Lisa Evans, from waste aluminium that was collected by the community and then melted down to create the finalised art piece which will be a lasting memory for everyone to appreciate.



The council also applied for various other grants including the Hate Crime grant of £2000 which enabled various community groups to work with Lloyd the graffiti artist. This was to draw attention to the Hate Crime week and various groups, Croeso Cynnes attendees and the Men's Shed, Ysgol Griffith Jones pupils and the Youth Club members worked alongside Lloyd to create colourful painted panels depicting appropriate messages such as -

“Nid yw harddwch gardd mewn un blodyn yn unig.”
“A garden's beauty never lies in one flower.”
This panel can be seen at Bethlehem Newydd Chapel.



“ No place for hate.” “ Parchwch eich gilydd.”
“ Byddwch yn ddewr.”

“ Together as one.” Panels were also created by the community. Two panels are displayed at Y Gât and one at Ysgol Griffith Jones school.

A further community events grant of £2000 was applied for and approved, but due to inclement weather, the event had to be cancelled.

The total grant funding received by St Clears Town Council for 2024/2025 was £82,640.78, which is an impressive sum.

Being elected Mayor is a great honour to bestow upon any councillor, and I considered it to be so, and always carried out my duties with dignity and respect and to the utmost of my abilities. I am proud member of the Town Council, and I endeavoured to convey that pride, whenever I was invited to engage with the public or to visit various organisations, of which there were many. I provide the following summary of the invitations received and outline some of the Town Mayor duties I performed:



st clears town council
cyngor tref sanclêr



I attended St. Clears YFC Agricultural Show and my alter-ego entered the Scarecrow Competition on behalf of the Town Council! Unfortunately, no prizes were awarded 😊. Both Bancyfelin and St. Clears Carnivals were attended. These three activities received grants from the Town Council's Community Chest fund, in order to support them.

I received an invitation to attend St. Cynin Church's Festival Weekend which showcased several local artists and crafters. I also opened the Mary Magdalene Church's Flower Festival.



Invitations were received from the Women's Institute, Merched y Wawr, Henoed Bancyfelin and St. Clears 60+ group. I was able to visit the local primary schools in turn and attend the Bancyfelin Meithrin's party for two of their long-standing members of staff.

As Mayor I attended several services arranged by the St. Clears branch of the Royal British Legion and it was my privilege to take part. Christmas Lights switch on in Bancyfelin.



The St. Clears Men Shed are very active in the town, and the council has been fortunate to be able to benefit from their varied skills, carrying out work on a volunteer basis, in accordance with the council's volunteer policy. They painted the Rebecca Riots sculpture thus protecting it from the elements.

The council has agreed to work closely with the local branch of the Royal British Legion in the future and take responsibility for the upkeep of the War Memorial area. As Mayor, I attended and took part in the 80th anniversary of V.E. day service at the war Memorial.





It was an absolute pleasure to meet with all the youth organisations in the area, or invite them to meet the Mayor and see the Council Chamber in order to be introduced to council responsibilities and to receive suggestions for the town. Two Ysgol Griffith Jones' pupils wrote to the council with suggestions for undertaking a litter pick in the town. As Mayor, I was very impressed by their initiative, and I invited them to visit the Mayor at the Council Chamber. In turn this prompted the council to set up a litter picking hub at Y Gât. They kept in contact, and I was delighted to have their company whilst doing a litter pick in the town. I wrote an article for the *Cardi Bach* about this featuring their photo and promoting the Litter Picking Hub.

I attended many Town Trust meetings such as Portreeve, at the Cei Taf. I was delighted to learn of exciting plans that have been drawn up for both the Cei Taf and the Town Hall, subject to successful grant applications.

There are two major projects the council is considering for the coming years, the development of the Woodland area by Maes yr Hufenfa housing estate and the development and installation of a playpark at Bancyfelin and renewal of the playpark in St. Clears.

A Town Council FaceBook page was set up to share information so that members of the community were made aware of what was happening. I provided several articles for *Y Cardi Bach* to further promote Y Gât and the work of the Town Council.

I have been thrilled to be Mayor, an amazing experience which I will always treasure. It has been a source of great pride for me to see some of the projects outlined in last year's annual report come to fruition during 2024/25 giving myself and the council a sense of achievement after a few arduous years. I would like to thank my fellow Councillors for working harmoniously alongside me; the deputy mayor for supporting me and stepping in when needed; the clerk for her commitment, patience and advice, supporting me at all times, thus enabling me to carry out my duties to the best of my ability. Thank you to the wider community for the immense support bestowed upon me. There are further exciting times ahead for St. Clears Town Council. So much can be achieved when there is unity and a willingness to follow through a shared vision.

Diolch i bawb am eich cefnogaeth yn gynghorwyr ac yn drigolion.

Cllr G.A.Davies
Town Mayor 2024/2025



Chapter 1: An Overview

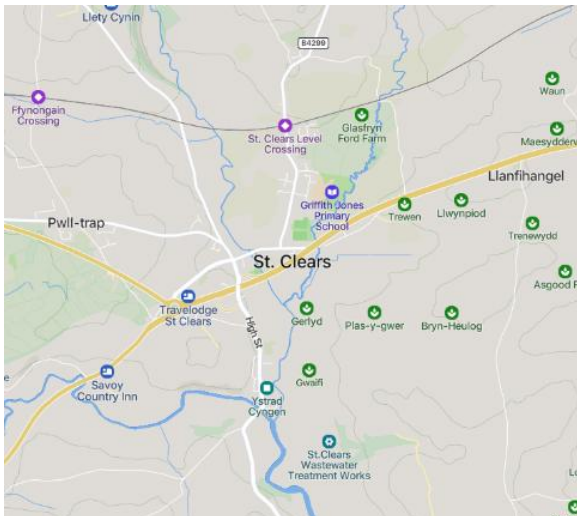
St Clears Town

St Clears is an historic market town situated between the bustling regional town of Carmarthen and the beautiful seaside resorts of Pembrokeshire.

St Clears, Bancyfelin and Pwll Trap offer good facilities for residents as well as warm and welcoming hospitality to its many visitors. The area offers a rural lifestyle with easy coastal connections but also has modern living conveniences and amenities, including shops and restaurants.

The Town has excellent transport links, with lots of diverse local businesses and a wide variety of community activities underpinned with a strong sense of community spirit.

The Town Council work in partnership with the local community to deliver a diverse range of events and projects throughout the year for both residents and visitors to the area to participate and enjoy.



St Clears is a town on the [River Taf](#) and a community in [Carmarthenshire, Wales](#).

At the 2011 census, the population was 2,995.

The community includes the small settlements of [Bancyfelin](#) and Pwlltrap.

St Clears Town Council

There has been a democratically elected local Council in St Clears since 1894 when the first elections were held for St Clears Parish Council. The UK Parliament in London passed an Act of Parliament in the same year creating elected civil parish councils for the first time. The idea was that if local taxes were being charged for local services, then Councils should be accountable to local people for how they spent the money. This would be done by giving local people the opportunity to elect local Councillors at regular intervals.



In 1974 there was a re-organisation of local government and Parish Councils became either Community Councils or Town Councils (depending on whether the area was a town or a rural community). So, on 1st April 1974, the old St Clears Parish Council was replaced by the present-day St Clears Town Council.

Functions of the Town Council

The Town Council fulfils its statutory duties and uses its powers to provide a wide range of services to meet local needs and improve the life of residents within the local community. In summary St Clears Town Council:-

- manages the former West Wales Craft Centre, now known as Y Gât
- manages the Welfare Field
- considers and provides comments on planning applications as a statutory consultee
- is a custodian of the War Memorial
- has installed and maintains a wide range of street furniture including litter bins, picnic and street benches and notice boards
- supplies and maintains the summer & winter floral displays (planters and telephone kiosks), trees and undertakes landscaping projects within the ward
- provides the Christmas trees and illuminations
- supports the St Clears Christmas lights switch on event in collaboration with St Clears Community Association and works closely with them to provide gifts and a Christmas grotto held at Y Gât.
- members of the council also sit on numerous committees and various school governing bodies (Ysgol Griffith Jones, Federation of Bancyfelin, Llansteffan & Llangain)
- the council employs a small team of outdoor contractors who work to improve the street scene in the town centre and tackle issues such as litter etc.
- manages the two bus shelters within the ward
- and more recently provides youth club provision which is held weekly at the leisure centre.



Who is who on the Council?

The purpose of the Town Council is to enhance the lives of residents through the delivery of various projects and services and to provide value for money for the precept that is raised through council tax.

Councillors are elected to represent the interests of all residents within the wards and the general interest of St Clears Town as a whole. At this level of local government, it is all about the community. This means that councillors work together as a corporate body to best serve the community's needs.

The Town Council is run by thirteen elected Councillors. For historical reasons, the Town Council area is divided into two parts, called Wards: the St Clears Ward and the Llanfihangel Abercowin Ward. The St Clears Ward is all the area to the west of the River Cynin and the Llanfihangel Ward is all the area to the east of the River Cynin (including Bancyfelin). Six Councillors represent the St Clears Ward and seven Councillors represent the Llanfihangel Abercowin Ward.

St Clears Town Councillors 2024/25

The last full council election was held on 5th of May 2022 and the following councillors were elected or have since been Co-opted to represent the ward of St Clears and Llanfihangel Abercowin for the 2022 to 2027 term of office. Your named Councillors are:-

St Clears Ward

- **CLlr Dr Edmund Davies** - Town Council responsibility: Member of the Environment Committee.
- **CLlr Owain Grant** - Town Council responsibility: Deputy Chair of the Town Council, Chair of the Environment Committee, The Town Council's representative on Ysgol Griffith Jones Board of Governors. A member of the 10 Towns, Welfare field, Community Woodland, and Y Gât sub-committees.
- **Richard Davies** (Co-opted) - Town Council responsibility: Member of the Environment and Community, Finance and General-Purpose Committee and a member of the Council's Y Gât and Welfare field sub-committees.
- **Brian Thornton** (Co-opted 01/25) - Town Council responsibility: Member of the Environment and Community, Finance and General-Purpose Committee and a member of the Council's Welfare field sub-committee.
- **CLlr Ieuan Thomas-Wigley** (Co-opted) - Town Council responsibility: Chair of the Community, Finance and General-Purpose Committee, A member of the Welfare field and Y Gât sub-committees.

Llanfihangel Abercowin Ward

- **Graham Edwards** - Town Council responsibility: Member of the Community, Finance and General-Purpose Committee and the Town Council's representative on the Bancyfelin, Llangain and Llansteffan Federation of Schools Board of Governors.



- **Annalyn Davies** (Co-opted) - Town Council responsibility: Town Mayor 2024_25, member of the Environment and Community, Finance and General-Purpose Committee. A member of the Council's Towns and Y Gât sub-committees as well as Town Council's representative on the Portreeve for the Town Trust. As Town Mayor in 2023/24, I engaged with the wider community, inviting various youth groups to visit the Council Chamber, also visiting several organisations, residential homes and primary schools within the ward. My interest lies in helping the local community; preaching; theatre and public speaking.
- **Jonathan Miller** (Co-opted): Town Council responsibility: Member of the Environment Committee.
- **Jane Rees** (Co-opted) Town Council responsibility: Member of the Community, Finance and General-Purpose Committee and member of the Council's Y Gât sub-committee.

Councillors who left during 2024_25

- Cllr Phil Rogers (Elected)
- Cllr Mark Davies (Elected)
- Cllr Tristy McDermott (Co-opted)
- Cllr Fiona Lanc (Co-opted)

Council expresses its thanks to the afore mentioned for their contribution to the Town Council and community during their time in office.

A full list of St Clears Town Councillors can be found on the Town Council's website at [St Clears Town Council \(www.stclearstowncouncil.co.uk\)](http://www.stclearstowncouncil.co.uk). If you wish to contact your local council please write to the Town Clerk on clerk@stclearstowncouncil.co.uk

The Town Mayor & Deputy Town Mayor 2024/25.

The Town Mayor is responsible for chairing the monthly ordinary meetings of St Clears Town Council and both the Mayor or Deputy Mayor usually represent the Town Council at various events and functions throughout the year. The Town Council normally appoints the positions of Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor from amongst its members at the annual meeting (AM) held in May each year. The mayor may appoint a consort to support them during their term of office, if they so wish.

Councillor Annalyn Davies was elected as Town Mayor at the Annual Council meeting held on May 2024 and is supported by Cllr Owain Grant, Deputy Mayor who was elected at the same meeting.



Town Council Staff

The Town Council's affairs are administered by an appointed Town Clerk, Mrs Catherine Lloyd Jenkins who is also the Town Council's Responsible Finance Officer (RFO).

The Town Clerk is the Council's Proper Officer and is an adviser to the Council on matters of strategy, policy and governance and is responsible for supporting the council to fulfil its legal, statutory, and financial obligations.

The Town Clerk reports to the council on a regular basis and ensures that the instructions of the Council in connection with its functions are carried out. The Town Clerk is accountable to the Council (as a Corporate Body) for the effective management of its assets, services, and human resources.

Town Council Meetings and Committees

Town Council Meetings

Decisions about Town Council business is taken at formal meetings of the Council. The Town Council has approved Standing Orders, which act as the written rules of the Council and set out the Council's internal organisation, administration procedures and procedural matters for meetings.

Business discussed at Town Council meetings is primarily of local importance - but sometimes can include discussions on issues, which are of regional or national importance.

Whilst some responsibilities are outside the jurisdiction of St Clears Town Council, the Council closely monitors and discusses the activities of Carmarthenshire County Council and highlights issues and concerns raised to the County Council on behalf of residents. The two local County Council members are invited to attend all Town Council meetings. St Clears Town Council also responds to consultations from Welsh Government, the County Council and other authorities.

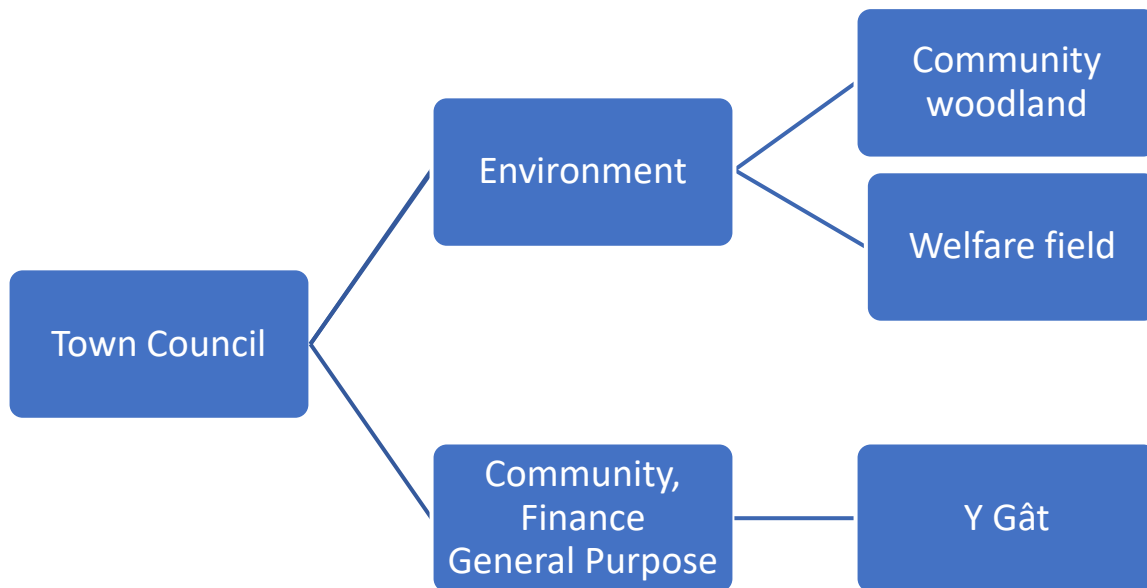
Council meetings are held at Y Gât and/or remotely via Zoom/Teams for business under the Local Government and Elections Act (Wales) 2021.

Full Council (FC) Ordinary monthly meetings are open to the press and public who are given an opportunity to report on agenda items. The Ordinary monthly meetings of the Town Council are usually held on the third Tuesday of every month except during summer recess in August. Meeting dates are set at the beginning of each calendar year during the Annual Meeting in May and can be found on the Town Council's notice board and website.



Committees

Some of the work of the Town Council is delegated to committees. During 2024/25 the Town Council had the following committees: -



The committees provide reports and recommendations to the Full Council for approval in relation to relevant matters raised, which falls into the committee's responsibility.

Training

Section 67 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 requires that all Town Councils must make and publish a Training Plan, setting out its proposals in relation to the provision of training for:

- i) The Councillors of the Town Council.
- ii) The Community Council staff.

The purpose of the training plan is to allow training to be planned in a proportionate way, considering factors such as the activities undertaken by that council, the current expertise of Councillors and clerks and the nature and significance of any training needs identified. Councillors and staff attended the following training sessions during the year 2024_25.

28/06/2024	Code of Conduct (CCC)	Catherine Lloyd-Jenkins
24/07/2024	Local Government Finance - Module 6	Ieuan Thomas Wigley



01/08/2024	Chairing Skills - Module 10	Ieuan Thomas Wigley
13/08/2024	Code of Conduct - Module 9	Ieuan Thomas Wigley
25/09/2024	Chairing Skills - Module 10	Annalyn Davies
	Finance & Governance Toolkit - Module 24	Catherine Lloyd-Jenkins
26/09/2024	Use of IT, Websites & social media - Module 16	Catherine Lloyd-Jenkins
07/10/2024	FILCA Qualification. Congratulations to the town clerk on successfully completing this qualification	Catherine Lloyd-Jenkins

Complaints / Freedom of Information (FOI)

Learning from a single complaint can result in significant changes in practice within an organization with prompt and efficient complaint handling. The Town Council aims to respond to complaints within a reasonable time as set out in the policy, but they are not deadlines by which complaints must be responded to. The Council aims to let complainants know when they need more time to consider a complaint and let them know in good time. The Council shall have good reasons for extending the timescales for responding to a complaint and this could be because a complaint is particularly complex.

Each complaint will be dealt with proportionately. This means some may take up little officer time and receive a short response, whilst others may require a thorough investigation and a detailed response.

Outcomes are separated into four categories to support transparency and openness.

- **Upheld:** The council has accepted it was at fault in all or most areas raised by the complainant or it only identified a small number of errors or technical faults, but these had a significant adverse impact on the complainant or the wider public.
- **Partially upheld:** The organisation found it acted without fault in most areas raised by the complainant. However, it identified a small number of errors or technical faults, and these had very little impact on the complainant or the wider public.
- **Not upheld:** The organisation found it acted without fault in all areas raised by the complainant.
- **Resolved:** The organisation was able to agree action it should take with the complainant to resolve the complaint and did not have to investigate further to decide whether it acted with fault.

		Outcome
Number of complaints the council received	2	
Outcome	0	1x Partially upheld



		1x Not upheld
Number of complainants of which wrote to the Ombudsman	1	Council had followed due process, and the Ombudsman confirmed the matter closed following resolution and letter issued.
Summary of the subject matter of the complaints received		Complaints received were in relation to issues appertaining to administration, publication of documents on the Council website, failure to respond to various requests and opposing council's decisions.
Matters of general importance arising out of those complaints, or the way in which the complaints were handled.		Council followed its policy in relation to dealing with complaints
Matters where action has been or is to be taken to improve services because of those complaints.		Council has considered areas where it needs to improve services in relation to communication and has since opened a Facebook page.





Chapter 2: Finance

Financial Planning, setting the budget & Income 2024/25

St Clears Town Council's financial year begins on 1st of April and ends on 31st of March the following year. Each November the town council begins to plan and set a budget to determine the summit needs to provide services and deliver projects on events for the next financial year.

The taxes collected on St Clears Town Council's behalf from the residential properties within the town by Carmarthenshire County Council as part of council tax is known as the precept. There is no other form of statutory income for the town council.

Income 2024/25

For the 2024/25 financial year, the Town Council remained in a stable financial position whilst continuing to deliver a broad range of services, facilities and community projects for residents.

The Council set a precept of £113,958.83, equivalent to £81 for the average Band D property, representing an increase from £108,532 in 2023/24. In addition to the precept, the Council generated £60,564 in other receipts, compared with £40,409 in the previous year, through grants, Welfare Field rental, events, and unit and room hire. The Council also continued to receive subsidy support from Carmarthenshire County Council towards the day-to-day management of Y Gât, although the long-term aim remains for the facility to become financially sustainable and self-sufficient in future years.

	£
Income 2024/25	
Income Source	Amount (£)
Council Precept	113,959
Grants, sponsorship, Welfare Field rental, events, unit & room hire and other receipts	60,564
Total Income	174,523

The Council continues to maximise opportunities for external funding and locally generated income to reduce pressure on taxpayers whilst maintaining services and community facilities. Income from hall and room hire, Welfare Field rental and activities at Y Gât make an important contribution towards supporting operational costs and improving the long-term sustainability of Council assets.

Reserves and Financial Stability

St Clears Town Council maintains a general reserve to help manage unexpected or emergency expenditure and to support cash flow throughout the year. The reserve is not earmarked for any specific purpose and is not intended to fund ongoing



expenditure. Local authority guidance recommends that councils hold reserves equivalent to between three and twelve months of expenditure, whilst also maintaining sufficient balances to cover staff salaries and associated costs.

At the end of 2024/25, the Council held **£58,366** in general reserves, which is within recommended guidance levels for a council of this size. The Council recognises that future financial pressures and unforeseen expenditure can arise at any time and therefore maintaining adequate reserves remains an important part of responsible financial management.

In addition, during the 2025/26 budget-setting process the Council approved an earmarked reserve of **£25,000** for the future development and improvement of the town playpark. This demonstrates the Council's ongoing commitment to investing in community infrastructure and improving facilities for residents and families across St Clears.

Income Source	Amount (£)
Council Precept	113,959
Grants, sponsorship	24542
Welfare Field	1000
Rental, events, unit & room hire and other receipts	35022
Total Income	174,523

Expenditure 2024/25

The Town Council delivers a wide range of services and community projects for the benefit of its residents. The Council's total expenditure during the year amounted to £168,616, comprising staff costs of £46,344 and other payments totalling £122,272. Expenditure supported a wide range of Council services and initiatives, including democratic and civic costs, office administration, environmental improvements such as flower planting and de-littering, Christmas lights, grounds maintenance, parks and the skatepark, recreation facilities and wider community projects. Some of the projects undertaken by the Council extend across more than one financial year and therefore certain associated costs will continue into future financial periods.

Area of Expenditure	Approximate Amount (£)
General Admin inc. insurance/subscriptions/Professional fees, office & premises etc.	33,696
Staffing Personnel	46,344
Grounds Maintenance, Flower Displays & Environmental Works	13,929
General Maintenance, Waste Bins & Bus Shelters/War memorial	9,656
Play & Skate Park Maintenance and Inspections	2,723
Public Lighting	5,210
Town WiFi	5,653
Y Gât Operational Costs	34,290



Area of Expenditure	Approximate Amount (£)
Youth Club Support & Community events	4,828
Christmas Lighting & Electricity	12,287
Total Expenditure	168,616

Reserves

St Clears Town Council continues to maintain a sound and responsible financial position, ensuring that sufficient reserves are available to support the effective delivery of services, manage cash flow pressures and protect the Council against unforeseen expenditure. The Council holds a general reserve which is not ringfenced (earmarked) for any specific purpose. The primary purpose of this reserve is to smooth the impact of uneven cash flow during the financial year and to provide financial resilience in the event of unexpected or emergency expenditure. It is not intended to fund ongoing day-to-day spending and, where utilised, the Council aims to replenish the reserve through the annual budget-setting process. Guidance for local councils recommends that reserves should normally equate to between three and twelve months of annual expenditure, while also maintaining sufficient balances to cover at least two months of staff salaries and associated employment costs, including National Insurance, pension contributions and taxation liabilities.

At the end of the 2024/25 financial year, St Clears Town Council held £58,366 in general reserves, which is considered to be within the recommended range for a council of its size and level of expenditure. As future financial pressures and unexpected costs cannot always be predicted, maintaining an appropriate reserve balance remains an important element of the Council's financial planning and risk management arrangements.

The Council's overall balances and reserves increased from £145,026 at the start of the year to £150,933 as at 31 March 2025. During the same period, cash and investments increased significantly from £142,842 to £171,416, reflecting continued prudent financial management and effective control of resources. The Council also saw an increase in fixed and long-term assets from £247,336 to £260,679 by year end. There was no borrowing outstanding as at 31 March 2025, demonstrating that the Council continues to operate without external debt liabilities. At year end, debtors totalled £33,085 and creditors totalled £53,568, reflecting ongoing projects, operational commitments and income due to the Council.

In addition to general reserves, the Council may establish earmarked reserves where it reasonably believes expenditure will arise in future years. As part of the 2025/26 budget-setting process, the Town Council approved the creation of earmarked reserves of £25,000 to support the future development and improvement to the town's playpark facilities. The Council currently holds £25,000 in earmarked reserves for this purpose, demonstrating its ongoing commitment to investing in community infrastructure and enhancing local amenities for residents and families. Overall, the Council remains in a stable financial position and continues to manage public funds responsibly whilst investing in local services, facilities and community wellbeing for the benefit of the residents of St Clears.



Grants (Community Chest)

St Clears Town Council is committed to supporting and strengthening the many networks and community groups that help to make a positive difference to the local area through its Community Chest Grant Scheme. The Town Council was able to support several local organisations on projects during 2024/25. Namely:

St Clears District & Community Committee (Carnival) 300

St Clears Young Farmers Show Committee 300

Bancyfelin & District Village Hall Committee 300

St Clears Juvenile sports group 300

TROT's Running Club 200

The Town Council looks forward to receiving applications from community organisations and associations which can demonstrate a clear need for financial support, which contributes towards improving the lives of residents. Further information regarding the Community Chest Grant Scheme and application forms can be found on the Town Council's website or by contacting the Town Clerk.

Financial Controls & Audit

Financial Controls and Audit are the systems the Town Council uses to make sure the money it receives is managed carefully, lawfully and transparently. Clear rules are in place for setting budgets, approving spending and recording all income and payments, so that no single person has control over the Council's finances on their own.

Regular checks are carried out during the year to make sure spending matches what the Council has agreed, and that public money is used for the purposes intended. At the end of each financial year, the Council's accounts are independently audited in line with Welsh Government requirements. The Town Council's Internal Auditor is Llewellyn Davies Accountants, and the external auditor is undertaken by Audit Wales, Cardiff.

The audits provide assurance to residents that the Council's finances are accurate, properly controlled and offer good value for money, helping to maintain trust and accountability to the local community.

Chapter 3: Services & Projects

Environment Committee

During the financial year, the Town Council's Environment Committee successfully delivered its agreed programme of works while remaining fully within the approved budget. Expenditure was carefully managed across a range of environmental and public realm activities, ensuring both value for money and positive outcomes for the community.



Routine welfare field maintenance was undertaken throughout the year to maintain safe, accessible, and well-presented recreational space for the community. Works included grass cutting, boundary management, and general upkeep, with attention given to areas of high usage to support community wellbeing and the football groups.

Following a ground condition survey, areas of soil compaction within the welfare field were identified and the Committee considered how to address these findings through targeted remedial actions, including aeration and ground improvement measures, to improve drainage, turf health, and long-term resilience of the field.

The Committee progressed with a few biodiversity actions, in line with its Biodiversity Report. These initiatives supported habitat enhancement and ecological diversity, contributing to the town's wider sustainability goals.

The Council's seasonal planting programme, covering both summer and winter schemes, was delivered as planned. These enhanced the visual appearance of public spaces while supporting pollinators and year-round interest.

Community, Finance and General Purpose Committee:

Throughout the year, the General Purpose and Finance Committee (CFGP) has discharged its duties responsibly and effectively, ensuring that all activities were delivered within the approved budget. Sound financial management has remained a key focus, with careful monitoring of income and expenditure maintaining the Town Council's financial stability while supporting agreed priorities.

The Committee has considered planning applications on behalf of the Town Council, ensuring local interests were represented and that development proposals were assessed in line with planning policy and community needs.

The maintenance and improvement of town assets has been ongoing, including the repair and replacement of public benches and planters, as well as the continued upkeep of the play and skate parks. Fortnightly inspections and annual condition reports have been received, with all repairs completed as required to ensure safety and accessibility.

During the year, the Committee approved financial contributions to local associations, community events and charitable causes, helping to support community life and encourage local participation.

A range of council policies were reviewed and updated, and any complaints received were addressed in accordance with established procedures, ensuring openness, accountability and good governance.

The Committee has also worked to strengthen engagement with residents and the local business community. Efforts have been made to maximise opportunities arising from the Ten Towns application, with the aim of improving economic provision and supporting local businesses within St Clears.

The committee contributed to enhancing the appearance of the town, including the continued provision of Christmas lights and donating gifts to the Christmas event and local school pupils (Ysgol Griffith Jones and Bancyfelin). Overall, the Committee's work reflects a strong commitment to financial responsibility, community wellbeing, economic development and the continued improvement of St Clears.

Y Gât

St Clears Town Council is pleased to announce the successful asset transfer of Y Gât.



Y Gât building began its life as a Farmers store, then Carmarthenshire County Council (CCC) ran it as a Craft Centre, gallery, shop and café using a grant from Antur Taf. However, economic, and social changes led to financial losses which in turn led to CCC considering closing the site. Five years ago, preCovid, discussions began between CCC and St Clears Town Council (SCTC) to see if an asset transfer project was viable. SCTC consulted and collaborated widely with internal and external partners eager to learn from others (e.g. Urban Foundry) whether taking over Y Gâtⁱ asset project was a viable and sustainable proposal. Several community consultations were held to gather data, residents' views and provide a detailed analysis ([Landsker Business Solutions](#)) of how the building could be utilized to enhance the communityⁱⁱ.

Issues considered included sustainability for longevity; economic diversification including job creation, attracting investment & passing trade to increase footfall; Social inclusion and equity, access to education, healthcare, and public services; Environmental and circular economy considerations to minimise the environmental impact whilst promoting an energy-efficient building; Cultural preservation, and celebration of the historic, bilingual and architectural integrity of the building whilst offering modern facilities. SCTC wrote a business plan and financial analysis before finally signing the and completing it and SCTC officially commenced managing the asset in October 2023.

Community benefits include reigniting life into a central hub of the town, building community cohesion.

- Employment: Facilities manager, lettings agent to manage the units & café, cleaner and a Farmers Market Coordinator to run the monthly/event markets.
- Businesses: Creative workshops (x7) for small businesses (Silversmith, leather/upholstery goods & artists), meeting rooms (x3) CCC/NHS/Mudiad Meithrin etc. and a gallery space for larger events (Nadolig Ni Community Christmas / Afallen Circular Economy).
- Croeso Cynnes: Weekly welcome/warm hub for residents (initially commenced from a grant but continues through SCTC due to demand).
- Community Hub supporting Wellbeing, cost of living needs etc: MIND support, Care Art project, Age Cymru, CCC's Hwb Bach y Wlad provision, Youth provision, Training (Digital/Fraud awareness).
- CAVs/Food for Thought community events/training opportunities (e.g. Food Hygiene)
- Café – Numerous requests from residents & visitors for provision as none within town centre after 2pm.
- CCC Library service. Popular library housed within building.
- PLANED WCFD food hubⁱⁱⁱ
- Keep Wales Tidy Litter picking Hub

As a result of all the hard work St Clears Town Council was awarded the 'Best Devolution of Service or Asset Project 2024 by One Voice Wales. An accolade to the Council's commitment to ignite new life into this historic building.



Llongyfarchiadau i aelodau presennol a gorffennol y Cyngor sydd wedi cyfrannu a sicrhau'r llwyddiant hwn.

Catherine Lloyd-Jenkins, Clerc Cyngor Tref Sanclêr yn derbyn y wobr.

Congratulations to current and past Council members who contributed to secure the success of this venture.

Catherine Lloyd-Jenkins, St Clears Town Clerk receiving the award.

Ten Towns Grant

The Town Council was successful in securing funding through Carmarthenshire County Council's Ten Towns programme (SPF), with St Clears selected as one of the designated towns. The application process required substantial additional work, including the submission of detailed evidence demonstrating proposed outcomes to ensure payment of the grant. This work was undertaken by the Town Clerk, whose commitment and competence were instrumental in achieving success. As a result of the successful application, significant capital investment of over £75000 was secured, alongside a revenue grant of over £3,000 enabling a wide range of improvements and initiatives to be delivered across the town, which included refurbishments at Y Gât and a cultural mural designed by residents and created by the artist Jenks.

Next steps to include:

- rebranding exercise with community and local schools
- energy efficiencies to lighting/heating/water to include solar panels
- bespoke website for Y Gât
- Community Food Fridge



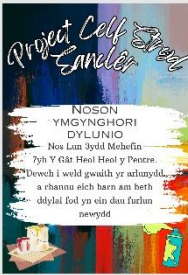
Training Hub – Coleg Sir Gâr Skills 24/Multiplication / Welsh language group

Chapter 4: Activities & Events 2024/25

St Clears Town Council endeavours to effectively plan and deliver its activities and projects by embracing the principles (• Long term • Integration • Involvement • Collaboration • Prevention) of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. This means considering the long-term impact of decisions, integrating different services and sectors, involving residents and stakeholders in consultations and planning, collaborating with local organizations and authorities, and



prioritizing prevention to address issues before they arise. By embedding these values, the town council ensures that its work not only meets current needs but also supports a thriving, resilient community for future generations.

	<p>Successful Christmas service held at Y Gât in collaboration with Bethlehem Newydd</p>
<p>Repairs undertaken to the Rebecca Riots Statue. Town Council bought the wood stain and St Clears Men's Shed kindly volunteered to paint the Rebecca Riot statue as part of the Town Council's voluntary policy. Great job and thank you!</p>	
	<p>Consultation night was held to gather residents' ideas for the murals to be painted on the wall of the chemist.</p>



The Town Mayor presents a cheque to the Mothers' Union AFIA during the St Cynin's Church Arts Festival.



The Mayor choosing the Carnival Queen 2024

D-day 80th anniversary Remembrance Service



Open Day on Health at the Leisure Centre. The mayor enjoyed a reflexology session and Gong Bath!

There were several stalls, and the leisure center was beautifully laid out. Unfortunately, there were very few visitors.



Other events included:

- Croeso Cynnes,
- Welsh classes / Dysgu Cymraeg / Coffi a chlonc
- Multiply Cooking workshops
- Tai Chi

The council replaced several benches in and around the town as part of its rolling programme. Those replaced included some near the skatepark and over at Bancyfelin.



Litter pick event. A big thank you to the Town Council members, family, and others who helped.



Chapter 5: Future Projects

The Town Council considers short-, mid- and long-term projects when setting the budget. The Council has noted the following as potential future projects to enhance the town's services and facilities.

St Clears Playpark

Bancyfelin Playpark

Wi-Fi improvements,

Website updates and use of digital boards

Community Woodland (Coedtir Sanclêr)
