LOUTH TOWN COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT

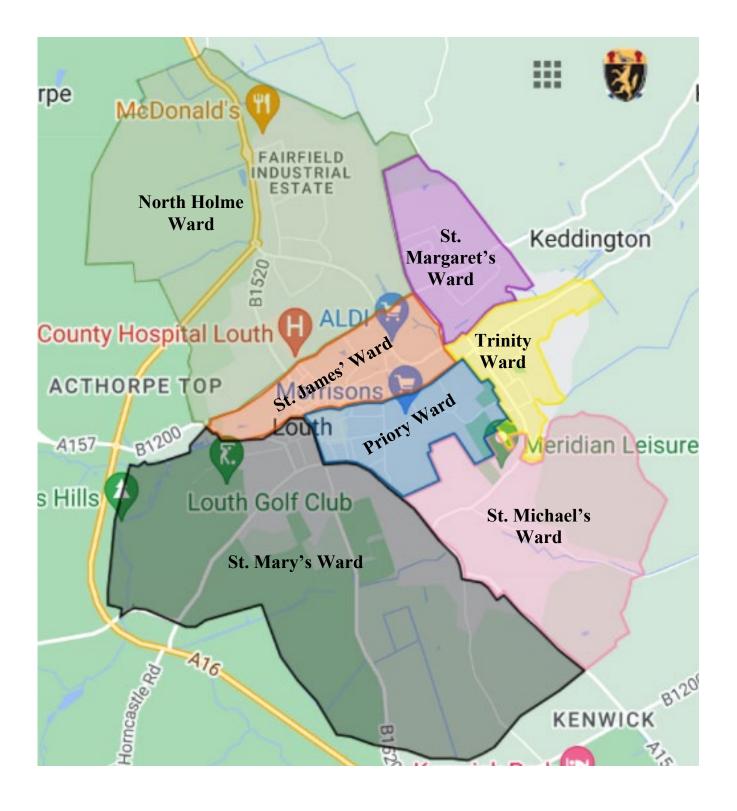
2023/24

DEMOGRAPHIC

Louth covers an area of approximately 4.394 square miles and has roughly 17,429 residents, of which around 13,270 are registered electors living in the town.

Louth Town Council is here to represent the people of Louth and it strongly listens to your concerns and does everything it can to deal with them or it liaises with East Lindsey District Council or Lincolnshire County Council.

Below is a map of Louth showing the different wards. On the page opposite are the contact details for your Town Councillors by ward.



MEMBERSHIP

Louth Town Councillors are widely involved in all aspects of the community and the Council has representatives on many local groups and organisations.

If there is a local matter that you are concerned about, please do not hesitate to contact your ward Councillor for advice or assistance.

Louth Town Council has 21 seats. There are 7 wards in the town and each ward is represented by up to 3 Councillors. There are currently 17 Councillors and 4 vacancies which moving into 2024/25 are as follows:

2024/25 are as follows.		
NORTH HOLME WARD H. Filer P. Starsmore	07796277682 07849381686	hfiler@louthtowncouncil.gov.uk pstarsmore@louthtowncouncil.gov.uk
ST. MARGARET'S WAR D. Moore D. Wing	D 07903456605 01507 355895	dmoore@louthtowncouncil.gov.uk dwing@louthtowncouncil.gov.uk
ST. JAMES' WARD J. Drake L. Frost D. Hobson	07896948124 07929655464 01507 355895	jdrake@louthtowncouncil.gov.uk lfrost@louthtowncouncil.gov.uk dhobson@louthtowncouncil.gov.uk
PRIORY WARD M. Barnes Mrs. P.F. Watson	07506145183 07485221125	<u>mbarnes@louthtowncouncil.gov.uk</u> pwatson@louthtowncouncil.gov.uk
TRINITY WARD L.M. Cooney J. Simmons	07977208538 01507 824274	<u>lcooney@louthtowncouncil.gov.uk</u> jsimmons@louthtowncouncil.gov.uk
ST. MICHAEL'S WARD Mrs. E. Ballard G. E. Horton J. Baskett	01507 604975 01507 606578 01507 354412	eballard@louthtowncouncil.gov.uk ghorton@louthtowncouncil.gov.uk jbaskett@louthtowncouncil.gov.uk
ST. MARY'S WARD M. Lamb Mrs. J. Makinson-Sanders Mrs. K. Parsons	07935139189 01507 600743 07946300852	<u>mlamb@louthtowncouncil.gov.uk</u> jmakinsonsanders@louthtowncouncil.gov.uk kparsons@louthtowncouncil.gov.uk

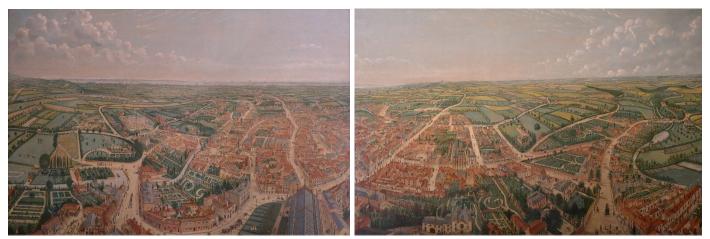
YOUR TOWN COUNCIL



Louth Town Council's main responsibility is the running, upkeep and maintenance of the Cemetery at London Road and its burial records, which date back to 1855. The Cemetery encompasses an area of over 18 acres and includes areas for the burial of cremated remains and traditional interments. It has two chapels, one of which the St. Athelheard's Greek Orthodox Church call home. In 2023/24 there were 16 burials and 28 cremations.

London Road Cemetery

The Town Council also owns the Sessions House, the former Magistrates Court building on Eastgate, at which it's office is now based and which houses the famous Brown's Panorama of Louth as well as many other art works, treasures and object d'art.



Brown's Panorama

It provides various bins, benches, bus shelters and notice boards in the Town and owns and is responsible for the upkeep of the 7 wonderful handcrafted wooden town signs which mark the entrances to the Town.



London Road Allotments



Town Sign

Amongst other things, the Council is responsible for providing Allotments and currently owns 2 sites while also renting a 3rd within the town. (These are managed for the Council by the Louth Cottage Garden and Allotments Association).

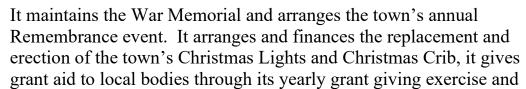
YOUR TOWN COUNCIL CONTINUED



Market Place Planter

It owns the planters located around the town and each year purchases plants to adorn the Town Centre. Councillors plant these and maintain them year-round. It also runs the Lovely Louth Competition and on behalf of Lincolnshire County Council (LCC), Louth Town Council undertake the cutting of the amenity grass verges around the town which amount to an area of approx. 68,966m2.

It owns 3 interactive speed signs which it places around the town as approved by LCC to deter speeding. It is also a planning consultee and is consulted on a range of other issues including Policing, Schools and Planning Policy for the town.





Louth's War Memorial

it owns, replaces and maintains CCTV cameras within the town centre and supports (with financial contributions) their surveillance which is operated from Boston with a Viewing Suite at Skegness and a third facility being installed at Mablethorpe.

It owns the site currently used for an Astro Turf pitch at London Road and owns the land on which the Louth Athletics Association's Club House is erected on. It owns other land in the vicinity which is rented out for use as grazing land and it also owns the Old Mill House which is privately leased.



Hubbard's Hills

Louth Town Council are also the custodian of Hubbard's Hills. The wooded valley, which was chiselled out of the chalk in the last Ice Age, was gifted to the people of the town back in the early 20th century. Everyone turned out in huge numbers to celebrate the opening of the Hills on August 1st 1907, a gift made to Ludensians as the result of a sum of money left in the Will of Auguste Alphonse Pahud in memory of his dear late wife. This lasting, living memorial is one of Louth's greatest treasures along with St. James' Parish Church. The land is to be enjoyed as a public park and pleasure grounds and it is an important leisure and tourist facility unique to Louth, recognised by the Town Council, who are pledged to preserve it for generations to come.

The Town Council acts on behalf of Louth residents in local matters which might involve highways, community transport schemes, parking and crime prevention, etc. It provides a stepping stone to District and County Councils and gives advice on who does what and how to access officers. It works closely with many organisations in the town such as Litter Pickers, Louth Lions, Louth Rotary, the Community Pay Back Team, Louth Museum, the Team Parish of Louth, Louth Run for Life, Louth Athletics Club, Hockey Club and Louth Football Club.

LOUTH TOWN COUNCIL 2023/24



Photograph Taken September 2023

Back Row: Cllr. Jeremy Baskett, Cllr. Paul Starsmore, Mrs. Sandra Dykes (Mayor's Serjeant 2023/24), Cllr. Darren Hobson (Deputy Mayor of Louth 2023/24 from February 2024 onwards), Cllr. Mrs. Eileen Ballard, Cllr. Malcolm Lamb, Cllr. Mrs. Pauline Watson Front Row: Miss Shona Chitauro (Town Clerk's Assistant), Mrs. Lynda Phillips (Town Clerk), Cllr. Mrs. Julia Simmons (Mayor of Louth 2023/24), Cllr. Mrs. Sue Crew (then Deputy Mayor 2023/24) decd., Rev. R. Mansfield (Mayor's Chaplain 2023/24) Cllr. Mrs. Jill Makinson-Sanders, Cllr. George Horton, Cllr. Lynne Cooney, Cllr. Margaret Barnes, Cllr. James Drake, Cllr. Hannah Filer, Cllr. Laura Frost, Cllr. Karen Parsons - Absent Cllr. D. Moore and Cllr. D. Wing – Missing, not co-opted until March 2024

EMPLOYEES

The Town Council has 4 employees, 2 in the office and 2 at the Cemetery. You may contact them as follows:

Louth Town Council, The Sessions House, Eastgate, Louth, LN11 9AJ Tel: 01507 355895



Mrs. Lynda Phillips Town Clerk clerk@louthtowncouncil.gov.uk

Miss Shona Chitauro Assistant to the Town Clerk admin@louthtowncouncil.gov.uk







Mr. Richard Hobson Maintenance Foreman

Mr. Hamish Lyon Maintenance Assistant

MEETINGS

Councillors Attendance at Meetings

2023/24 saw Councillors meet for 10 Town Council Meetings, 15 Planning Committee, 7 Governance and Finance, 4 Personnel Committee and 6 Community Resources Committee Meetings.

Councillors Involvement with External Bodies/Groups

Councillors are part of working groups covering the following topics: Asset Review, Events, Floral Enhancement, Financial Overview, Planning and Speed Awareness. Councillors also liaised with external bodies such as Louth United Charities, Louth Navigation Regeneration Partnership, CCTV Partnership, KEVIGS, the Rural Market Town Group and the Active Travel Scheme.

SCHEDULE OF MEETING DATES 2024/25

Date	Start Time	Town Council (T), Robed (R)	Planning (P)	Community Resources (C)	Governance and Finance (G)	Personnel (H)
14 th May 2024	6pm	Annual Town Council Meeting				
28 th May 2024	6pm		Р	С		
18 th June 2024	6pm	Т	Р		G	
16 th July 2024	6pm		Р	С		Н
6 th August 2024	6pm		Р		G	
27 th August 2024	6pm	R	Р			
17 th September 2024	6pm		Р	С		
8 th October 2024	6pm		Р		G	
29 th October 2024	6pm		Р	С		Н
19 th November 2024	6pm	Т	Р			
10 th December 2024	6pm		Р		G	
14 th January 2025	6pm	R	Р			
4 th February 2025	6pm		Р	С		Н
25 th February 2025	6pm		Р		G	
25 th March 2025	6pm	Т	Р			
15 th April 2025	6pm		Р	С		Н
22 nd April 2025	6pm	Annual Town Meeting				
6 th May 2025	6pm		Р		G	
Total		6	16	6	6	4

FINANCE

Summary of Louth Town Council's Accounts to 31st March 2023:

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2022/23 for

LOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

	Year e	ending	Notes and guidance		
	31 March 2022 £	31 March 2023 £	Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil balances. All figures must agree to underlying financial records.		
1. Balances brought forward	590858	613289	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.		
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	275 668	283063	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.		
3. (+) Total other receipts	54649	65794	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.		
4. (-) Staff costs	(1948)	123052	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.		
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).		
6. (-) All other payments	188405	183492	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cash- book less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).		
7. (=) Balances carried forward	613289	655662	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).		
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	589104	645696	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.		
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	1340670	1344324	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.		
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).		

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)		\checkmark		The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			\checkmark	The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2023 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

2010612023

as recorded in minute reference:

T23. e)

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

Date

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/23 Form 3 Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities*

30/05/2023

FINANCE CONTINUED

The Council has agreed the following budgets for 2024/25:

Approved at TC 9th January 2024 as proposed by GF Committee 12th December 2023

		Proposed Budget 24/25
101	Governance and Finance Committee Day to Day	
	Governance and Finance : Income	1,050
	Governance and Finance : Indirect Expenditure	14,051
401	Community Resources Committee Day to Day	
	Community Resources Day to Day : Income	50,129
	Community Resources Day to Day : Indirect Expenditure	236,482
501	Personnel Committee Day to Day	
	Personnel Day to Day : Indirect Expenditure	88,700
601	Town Council Day to Day	
	Town Council Day to Day : Indirect Expenditure	30,977

Total Income	51,179
Total Expenditure	370,211
Amount of General Reserve to be used to limit an increase (to make	360,211
up amount for London Road Sports Partnership to £20,000) - £10,000	,
Precept Required 24/25	309,032
2024/25 Annual Cost Per Band D Property	54.21
2023/24 Annual Cost Per Band D Property	54.05
2024/25 Annual Increase/Decrease Per Band D Property	0.16
2024/25 Monthly Cost Per Band D Property	4.52
2023/24 Weekly Cost Per Band D Property	1.04
2024/25 Weekly Cost per Band D Property	1.04
2024/25 % Increase/Decrease Per Band D Property	0.30%

CHAIRMAN'S OVERVIEW

Below is a summary of the remit of each Committee and a list of some of the major issues / topics that were considered during the year by the Town Council as a whole and by its Committees.

Town Council:

- Meets to receive and approve the minutes of the Council's Committees.
- Consolidates and approves the work and recommendations of its Committees.
- Receives presentations / reports from outside bodies to better inform the Council's decisions.
- Decides upon the final budget and precept request.
- Outright and overarching responsibility for all Council matters.

Issues / Topics that were discussed Between March 2023 and March 2024:

- Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/23
- Co-option of Cllrs. Mrs. Pauline Watson and Mrs. K Parsons
- Louth Food Festival
- The commemorative tree planting for King Charles III
- LALC Management Committee
- Tree Planting and Community Orchard Scheme
- Reclaim the High Street / Platform Places
- Hubbard's Hills
- St. James' Church Christmas Tree Festival
- London Road Sports Partnership
- Application for 3G at Wood Lane
- Brown's Panorama
- Louth Flood Alleviation Scheme the Council were integral in securing this vital facility for Louth and now contribute annually to its upkeep.
- Precept
- D-Day 80th Commemoration
- Louth Community Arts Centre Project
- Co-option of David Moore and Dave Wing
- Trinity Allotments
- White Ribbon Initiative
- Hubbard's Hills Working Group
- Civility and Respect Pledge



Mayor of Louth 2023/24, Mrs. Julia Simmons and her husband, Mr. Alan Simmons



The Mayor and the Mayor's Serjeant, Mrs. Sandra Dykes

Planning Committee:

The Planning Committee has delegated responsibility for all items relating to planning. It makes comments on planning applications, traffic regulation orders, proposed works to trees, street naming, planning enforcements and planning appeals. Its observations are forwarded to the relevant authority who make the final decision. Each application is considered individually and supported or opposed according to its compatibility with planning policies and proper planning reasons. It notes planning decisions, other correspondence received e.g., temporary road closures and considers matters relating to road safety and enforcement complaints as well as any other issues relating to planning or the environment.

Between March 2023 and March 2024, the Planning Committee:

- Consulted on 169 planning applications with 17 variances to ELDC.
- Commented on 27 'Works' to trees.
- Commented on 8 street-naming proposals.
- Consulted on the Government's Active Travel Scheme, which aims to encourage walking and cycling throughout England.
- Consulted on the National Grid's Proposals to Transmit Energy from Grimsby to Walpole via pylons.

Issues / Topics that were discussed in 2023/24:

- Proposed No Waiting at Any Time Order Ramsgate and Alexandra Road (supported)
- Planning Working Group Membership
- NHS changes to services at hospitals in Grimsby and Scunthorpe
- ELDC Tree Preservation Order on a Holm Oak (supported)
- Proposals for a new Morrisons store
- Shop Signage
- Louth Transport Board
- Proposed 30mph Speed Limit Legbourne Road (supported)
- NHS Public Consultation Your Health, Your Hospitals
- Police Crime Commissioner Engagement Session
- Sub-Regional Strategy Consultation
- Rural Town Market Group
- Polling District/Polling Places Review 2023
- NHT Survey for Lincolnshire County Council, giving vital information about the Lincolnshire road network to improve Highways and Transport services.
- Planning Considerations
- Proposed No Waiting at Any Time Order Lincoln Way (supported)
- Proposed Speed Limit A613 (Market Rasen to Louth) (supported)
- Lincolnshire County Council Consultation Louth Town Centre
- National Grid Electricity Commission Grimsby to Walpole
- Proposed No Waiting at Any Time Order Eastgate (supported)

Proposed New Morrisons Store

Governance and Finance Committee:

The Governance and Finance Committee has responsibility for the collation and production of annual budgets and recommendations to the Town Council, it oversees financial transactions of the Council. It approves the auditing arrangements of the Council, oversees the Council's formal grant giving process, assessing and making resolutions on applications received. It reviews the Council's Financial Regulations, Standing Orders, Code of Conduct, Internal Controls and other matters as required. It ensures that all statements of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return can be approved by the Full Council. It develops general policies and strategies on behalf of the Council for implementation.

Issues / Topics that were discussed between March 2023 and March 2024:

- Oversaw Audit procedures and obtained an unqualified audit report for 2022/23.
- Proposed to Town Council budgets for 2024/25.
- Approved an increase of Cemetery Fees by 3.5%.
- Oversaw the Council's Risk Management.
- Introduced online banking at the Council.
- Reviewed the Council's earmarked reserves.

The Governance and Finance Committee approved budgets for possible expenditure on the following major items for 2024/25:

- Christmas Celebrations including Safety checks, Lights and Tree £12,500
- Payment of annual maintenance contribution for the Flood Alleviation Scheme £19,077
- Minimum contribution to the London Road Sports Partnership of £10,000
- Amenity Grass Cutting £14,000
- Hubbard's Hills Budget £52,500
- CCTV Maintenance £4,515
- Remembrance Day Parade £1,000

The Governance and Finance Committee also approved Grant Awards to the following groups:

- Louth Athletic Club £310.00
- Louth and District Concert Society - £300.00
- Louth Fun and Friendship Festival – £250.00
- Louth Navigation Trust £400.00
- Louth Male Voice Choir -£1,000.00
- Louth Community Arts Centre Project - £200.00





Louth's Christmas Tree 2023

Left and Below Louth's Remembrance Sunday 2023





Community Resources Committee:

The Community Resources Committee has responsibility for all inspection, maintenance, refurbishment, terms and conditions, regulations and charges re. Louth Town Council owned or 'responsible for' assets e.g. Church Clock or 'default' assets e.g. War Memorial. It meets to discuss any issues regarding the running, upkeep and maintenance of all of the Council's assets

Issues / Topics discussed between March 2023 and March 2024:

- Coronation of King Charles III tree planting in Westgate Fields
- Rural Market Towns Group Membership
- Louth Art Trail
- Asset Register
- Proposed 3G Astroturf Pitch at Wood Lane
- Charles Street Recreation Ground
- Hedgehog Highway Project
- London Road Sports Complex
- St. James' Church Clock
- St. James' Church Floodlights
- Trinity Allotments
- Leases and storage agreements
- Remembrance Sunday
- Use of the Sessions House as a polling place
- Fun and Friendship Day



Part of Louth's original Art Trail



Sessions House

Personnel Committee:

The Personnel Committee has the responsibility to oversee all staffing matters in conjunction with the Town Clerk e.g., staffing structures, salaries, wages, employment contracts, policies and procedures, recruitment, appointments, compilation of job descriptions and person specifications.

- Reviewed the Policies and Procedures, including the Dignity at Work/In Council Policy.
- Supported officers and Councillors attending training courses throughout the year.
- Ensures the well-being of the 4 Town Council employees.
- Oversaw appraisals.
- Agreed to apply for the Local Council Award Scheme Foundation Award.
- Agreed to support staff's DSE requirements.

2023/24 MAJOR EVENTS

- Continued to support residents' views on planning applications for major developments in all areas of Louth.
- Continued the commitment of financial support of a Reserve Fund for Flood Alleviation schemes.
- Annual Remembrance Day parade.
- The Council celebrated the Coronation of King Charles III and arranged the planting of a Royal Oak in Westgate Fields to commemorate the occasion.

INTO 2024/25

In 2024/25 the Council will look to produce an Action Plan which will be a 'live' document and which by necessity will change but it will aim to provide Louth residents with a clear understanding of the Council's priorities and objectives for the coming Council year. Whilst some of the key issues facing the town are areas not directly under the control of the Council, it will seek to use it's influence to ensure that other providers also respond to the needs and aspirations of Louth's residents. As such below is a list of actions that the Council is expected to meet:

- Engage with community groups and individuals to help shape the Council's plans for the future.
- Assist residents in retaining, maintaining, improving and promoting the use of public spaces where possible.
- Represent the views and promote the interests of the people of Louth.
- Engage with the community, local businesses, community groups and organisations in Louth.
- Listen, investigate and respond to issues identified by the people of Louth and, if appropriate, signpost to the correct person, organisation for resolution, further progression
- Work with and support local groups for the improvement of the facilities, environment and social and economic wellbeing in the community.
- Maintain good governance, including adhering to relevant benchmarks to achieve Foundation Award requirements of the Local Council Award Scheme.
- Develop proposals for enhancement of the town centre with Lincolnshire County Council and East Lindsey District Council.
- Continue to maintain and contribute to CCTV in the town
- Provide grants to local organisations through its yearly grant giving exercise.
- Continue to provide funding to the Citizen's Advice Bureau Lincoln and Lindsey.
- Continue to uphold Civic Traditions such as Civic Sunday and Mayor Making.
- Continue to organise and facilitate the town's Remembrance Sunday parade and church service.
- Continue to look after Louth's War Memorial.
- Continue to contribute to Louth's Flood Alleviation Scheme to ensure its continuation.
- Continue to provide allotments.
- Continue to provide Christmas lights and a feature Christmas tree for the town.
- Continue to cut the amenity grass on behalf of Lincolnshire County Council
- Ensure that bins in its ownership are maintained and replaced if faulty.
- Liaise with other authorities if a new bin is requested.
- Maintain benches in its ownership and replace, as necessary.
- Consider how best to review Louth's Neighbourhood Plan.
- Maintain Louth's 7 handmade wooden entrance signs.
- Deliver beacon lighting event to commemorate the 80th anniversary of D-Day.



Flood Alleviation Scheme in action October 2023

INTO 2024/25 CONTINUED

- Maintain Hubbard's Hills.
- Continue to maintain the church clock.
- Continue to fund electricity for church floodlights.
- Continue to run the Lovely Louth Competition and Festive Window Competition.
- Continue to provide floral enhancement in the town centre.
- Continue to erect and maintain reactive speed signs.
- Continue to ensure that assets such as the land on the Pavilion site, London Road and at the Louth Athletics site, London Road remain available for the enjoyment of sporting activities.
- Ensure that there is transparent information about payments, audit documents, budget and precept available.
- Comply with the law in completing annual accounts and audit activities.
- Ensure that all policies and procedures are up to date, have been reviewed and next review date is evident, as necessary.
- Promote training and induction and ongoing support for members of staff and councillors.
- Ensure that the Council has access to advice and training through subscriptions to remain well informed.
- Ensure that data protection regulations are met.
- Ensure that IT equipment meets requirements and support is in place.
- Ensure our website is kept updated.
- Improve the Town Council's corporate image.
- Continue to provide burials at Louth Cemetery
- Undertake headstone safety tests.
- Contribute to nature recovery through green space projects to enhance biodiversity and protect the environment at the Cemetery.
- Undertake a tree survey at Louth Cemetery.
- Investigate repair, rejuvenation and repurposing of the Chapel at Louth Cemetery.
- Continue to maintain St. Aethelheard's Chapel.
- Maintain Civic Property such as robes, chains, the mayor's boards and mace as required.

Hubbard's Hills



Louth Cemetery



Civic Regalia



Contact Us:

Louth Town Council The Sessions House Eastgate Louth LN11 9AJ

01507 355895 <u>clerk@louthtowncouncil.gov.uk</u> <u>www.louthtowncouncil.gov.uk</u>