

Littlehampton Town Council Event Strategy

Version

Implementation Date

Review Date

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1. Introduction

Littlehampton Town Council has developed this Event Strategy to embrace the creativity and enthusiasm for events to be hosted in the town. Over many years, the council has developed and delivered an annual programme of events to encourage involvement from communities, groups and individuals. The council has recognised the benefits of establishing a coordinated approach to a programme of events, acknowledging the opportunities associated with delivering events and the benefits these can bring to the town.

2. Purpose of this Strategy

Why is a Strategy needed?

The Strategy will drive the council's strategic approach to delivering a cohesive programme of events either directly or through event support, it will outline the vision and strategic objectives and how they will be measured including public engagement activities.

Background

The Strategy has been developed using extensive knowledge of the events history of the Town from Officers and Councillors, together with public consultation conducted as part of the Event Review (2024).

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

Littlehampton Town Council (LTC) events will contribute to a strong sense of community by celebrating diversity, promoting inclusivity and support local groups and businesses across all sectors.

LTC events will be influenced by the community culture and recognise the heritage of the Town, with an aim to bring people together for enjoyable and informative experiences. LTC events will strengthen identity and pride in our town.

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

Littlehampton Town Council (LTC) will run or support a series of events throughout the year for the residents, visitors, organisations and businesses of the Town. LTC events will promote inclusive experience, encourage public engagement and create opportunities for community fundraising and awareness as well as offer space for events.

Events will be devised, developed and assessed in line with a set of event assessment criteria and will support the council's priorities as set out in its Business Plan.

Event Proposal Assessment Criteria

The event assessment criteria will provide a structure for LTC to assess all event proposals whether they come from within or outside the council. The criteria have been created to be in line with the mission of this strategy, as well as the LTC Business Plan and Town Centre Strategy. The criteria are used as a guide for what LTC would like individual events to achieve.

3. Strategic Objectives

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

1. To contribute to a sense of community, local pride and cultural identity
2. To contribute to an attractive, welcoming, safe and thriving town supporting economic growth and tourism
3. To deliver cost effective events that utilise council resources efficiently
4. To measure the success and achievements of events by undertaking an annual review
5. To work in collaboration with our partners to fulfil the Strategy and include visitor, resident, business and contractor feedback in event development and review.

3.1 Event Classification

To deliver the strategic objectives we will create an events programme that will have a mixture of different types of events.

1. Headline

Headline events are large scale events with the purpose being to attract residents and visitors for an extended period and to promote and showcase the town to a large audience.

2. Town Centre

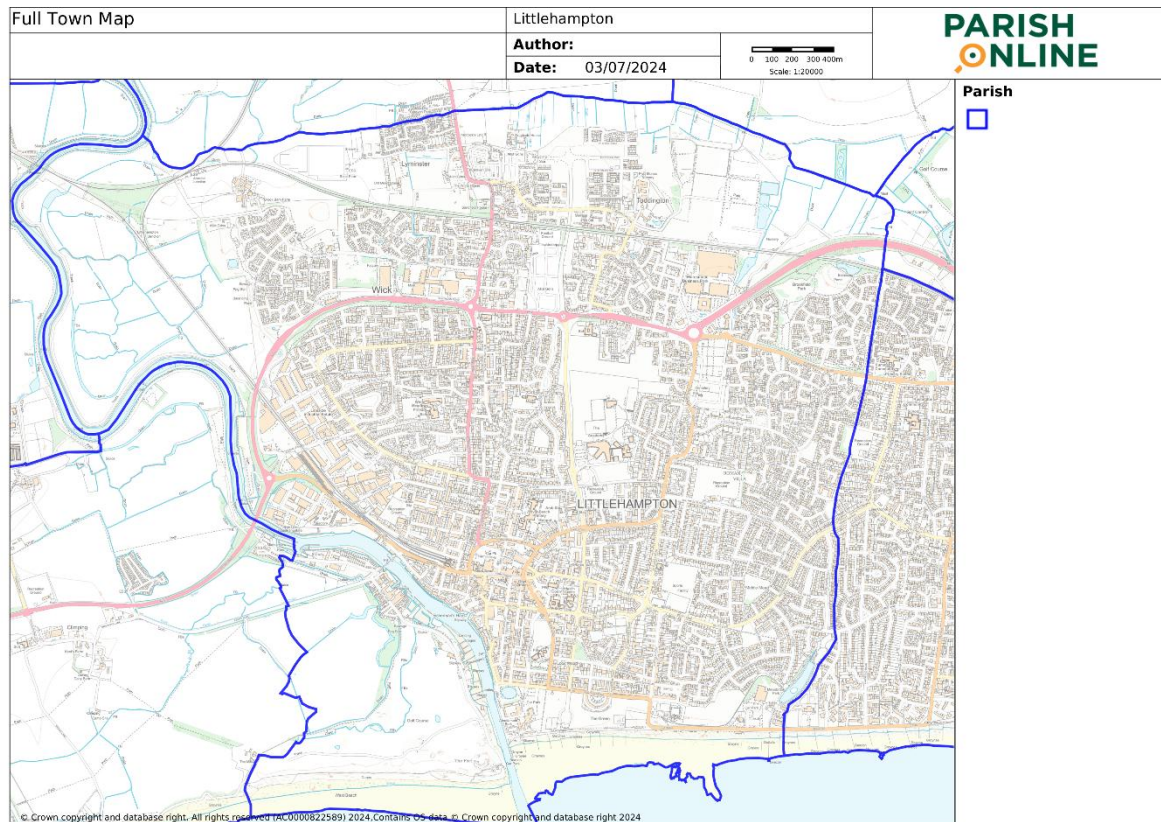
Town Centre events aim to bring residents and visitors to the retail area of the town, encourage people to spend locally and to promote a positive experience.

3. Community

Community events are predominantly aimed at residents and those from the surrounding area. The events encourage a sense of community and showcase and celebrate the town.

3.2 Area of Coverage

For the purposes of this Strategy, the area of coverage will be as demonstrated in the map below.



3.3 Core Event Programme

Littlehampton Town Council delivers eight core events each year between April and November. These events form the foundation of the council's annual programme and are made up of the following:

Easter High Street Events – Two dates in the Easter holidays

Armed Forces, Families and Veterans Day [LC1.1]– In line with the national event (usually third Saturday in June)

Summer High Street events – 4/5 Dates in the Summer Holidays (usually Wednesday)

Sandcastle Competition – a date in either July or August depending on tide times

Screen on the Green – A Saturday in August

Town Show and Family Fun Day – Second Saturday in September

Remembrance Sunday – In line with the national event

Christmas Lights Switch on – Third Saturday in November

4. Event Proposal Assessment Criteria

Feasibility

LTC will build an events programme designed to meet one or more of the strategic objectives and based on the steps outlined below. The programme will be set for a 3-year period to enable efficient and effective planning and will include 20% of the budget to be held as a reserve to cover inflation increases.

Events of national significance such as Remembrance Sunday, Beacon Lighting and Royal Celebrations are excluded from this assessment.

Step One

Assess event proposal against the criteria

Criteria – the event...	Essential or Desirable
Will encourage the attendance from residents and visitors to the town	Essential
Is fun and enjoyable to attend and/or participate in	Essential
Is designed, developed, and delivered as far as practically possible with inclusivity considerations such as physical accessibility, diverse audience attendance and adaptable participation elements	Essential
Will offer opportunities to encourage and embrace interaction and participation from a diverse range of communities	Essential
Will offer fundraising and awareness raising opportunities for charities, organisations and local Services	Desirable
Will encourage connections with local businesses, suppliers, and event providers	Desirable

Will offer engagement and educational experiences	Desirable
Are aspirational events that can bring new opportunities to the Town	Desirable
Will have support from a diverse portfolio of sponsors	Desirable
Will use a variety of existing event spaces and centres across the Town	Desirable

Step Two

Event proposals will be assessed as to whether it is feasible for LTC to deliver or offer assistance. Measures of feasibility will include available resources: expertise, capacity, budget, equipment, and suppliers available to deliver the event.

Step Three

- a. If the event is an internal event, Officers will work on costs and bring a full proposal to committee for approval as part of the 3-year programme cycle.
- b. If the event is an external event, Officers will bring an outline proposal to committee prior to exploring resource implications.

5. Measures of Success

Events will be measured against delivery of the Strategy and the Assessment Criteria detailed above. Measures of success will include:

- Value: Social, Economic, Reputational
- Attendance: Target audience reached; Repeat attendance
- Engagement: level of enjoyment; Social Media engagement, Media coverage
- Cost: Value for money.

6. Action Plan

Littlehampton Town Council has created an Action Plan that is broken down into Strategic Objectives, each supported by clear goals and specific actions to guide delivery and ongoing improvement for council run events.

Appendix A – Event Strategy Action Plan

Strategic Objective	Number	Goal (bold) and action description	Update
Contribute to a sense of community, local pride, and cultural identity	1	The Town Council will run or support a series of cohesive events that aim to bring people together by celebrating diversity and recognising the heritage of the town	
	1.1	Working in collaboration, continue to build on the Town Council's core programme of events and actively support events that enhance the current offer including multi-location events and activities that extend the season.	
	1.2	Ensure that the Event Strategy Action Plan supports the delivery of goals from other relevant strategies such as the Town Centre Strategy.	
	1.3	Work in collaboration with the Events Forum to build on town wide events that support the delivery of the Events Strategy	
	1.4	Strengthen partnerships with Littlehampton Museum, Business Forum, Events Forum, Sports Forum and relevant stakeholders to ensure that events incorporate local heritage and are diverse in their representation of the community	
	1.5	Explore opportunities to develop celebratory community events e.g. Mayor / Merit Awards	
	1.6	Review existing stallholder (commercial and non-profit) policies for Town Council events	
	1.7	Celebrate achievements through a variety of communication channels	
Contribute to an attractive, welcoming, safe, and thriving town supporting economic growth & tourism	2	Encourage and facilitate a range of activities and events that help create a vibrant town, increase footfall and deter anti-social behaviour	

Strategic Objective	Number	Goal (bold) and action description	Update
	2.1	Ensure that the Town Council's core programme of events and activities are spread across multiple town venues including the High Street	
	2.2	Identify and categorise potential event sites – ownership, accessibility, covenants, licences	
	2.3	Encourage the use of the High Street for activities and events that support the delivery of the Town Centre Strategy through collaboration with the Littlehampton Business Forum and other event organisers	
	2.4	Work collaboratively with stakeholders to expand current offer and explore new opportunities	
	2.5	Develop systems to increase event marketing exposure through partnerships and resource sharing	
	2.6	Ensure that event organisers utilise the Visit Littlehampton website (both sides) to maximise audience reach	
	2.7	Continue Events Guide production, covering multi-organisation events.	
	2.8	Develop or explore ways in which the Town's profile can be raised positively through cohesive messaging	
Deliver cost-effective events that utilise resources efficiently	3	Ensure that council budgets are maximised to deliver value for money whilst providing the highest impact	
	3.1	Ensure that both internal and external event proposals are assessed against the Event Assessment Criteria and cost efficiencies are explored	
	3.2	Undertake a tender process to secure event support contracts that achieve best value	

Strategic Objective	Number	Goal (bold) and action description	Update
	3.3	Create an event budget reserve that is 20% of the Town Council's annual Community Event Budget to cover inflation increases during the course of the three year core programme	
	3.4	Explore opportunities to combine resources with stakeholders to maximise event programme offers.	
	3.5	Explore funding opportunities including sponsorship .	
Measure success and achievements of events through annual review	4	Evaluate success using measures of Value, Attendance, Engagement and Cost	
	4.1	Introduce systems to collect visitor, resident, business, and contractor feedback and to monitor the impact of events	
	4.2	Use feedback to inform development and review of events programme and activities	
	4.3	Produce annual Event Report with analysis and recommendations	
Work in collaboration with partners to fulfil the Strategy	5	Work with external organisations to develop and/or support them to bring events and activities to the Town.	
	5.1	Through the Town Centre Action Group, work with Arun District and West Sussex County Councils to streamline licensing and approvals process for event applications	
	5.2	Develop the Event Forum to become a support network for event organisers and actively promote its activities.	
	5.3	Define roles within the Event Forum and identify skill gaps within the Event Forum. Develop training opportunities including volunteering opportunities	

Strategic Objective	Number	Goal (bold) and action description	Update
	5.4	Work with the Event Forum to create an events planner that all partners can contribute to that will assist in identifying gaps and avoid potential date clashes	
	5.5	Provide support to external event organisers in developing event management plans to enable them to deliver safe, well run and enjoyable events	
	5.6	Promote best practice for holding events to enable community organisations to plan, organise and deliver events for themselves	
	5.7	Develop an Event Support Funding Policy and Procedure	
	5.8	Utilise the Love Littlehampton website to deposit useful resources for local event organisers	
	5.9	Identify opportunities to connect event organisers so they can share resources.	
	5.10	Work collaboratively with the Littlehampton Business Forum to achieve the Event Strategy and Town Centre Strategy goals.	
	5.11	Develop systems to share information and create networking opportunities for key stakeholders	