

Wymondham Town Council

Annual Report 2007-8



What the Town Council has been doing for Wymondham this year

June 2008

Mayor reflects on twelve months in office



Cllr Len Elston, Town Mayor 2007-08

I am delighted to have served as Wymondham's Town Mayor during 2007-08, though I must now confess to some reservations when the idea was first put to me! Being the public face of the town has allowed me to attend many functions and meet a large number of residents, of whom the vast majority agree with me that Wymondham is a wonderful place in which to live.

Within this annual report you will see some of the activities and achievements of the Town Council. I am especially proud of the new Skateboard and BMX facilities at Browick Road recreation ground which I formally opened last July: the story is covered later in this report. Many of you have commented favourably on the

refurbished town sign and the improved Christmas lights and I am particularly pleased that our largest project over the last two years, the provision of 60 further allotments, has been successfully completed.

My focus has been to promote Wymondham on every occasion and to ensure that your voice is heard, especially in respect of future developments which could radically change the way we live and the ambience of our historic market Town. Your councillors are committed to representing your views and I thank them for their support over the twelve months this report covers. I also thank the office and grounds staff who help them to carry out their decisions.

Town Councillors

Or more appropriately, in a review of 2007-8, who were the councillors during the past year? In fact, the council has not changed, and names and brief contact details of the current Town Councillors are set out below. Full details of all the councillors who were elected last May to serve until 2011 are given in the summer edition of 'About Wymondham' which accompanies this report.

Abbey Ward

Mr S N Dumbrell (607820)
Mr D W S Fletcher (601482)
Mr A N Howell (604373)

Cromwells Ward

Mr L P Daws (603666)
Mr C Kent (604123)
Mr N Ward (607192)

Northfields Ward

Mr L C Elston (603456)
Mr M J Gibbins (600432)
Mr J F Mooney (604482)

Rustens Ward

Mr K J Cooper (602966)
Mr C Foulger (605920)
Mr M R Goldspink (600615)

Town Ward

Ms A Andrews (607786)
Mr P N Broome (600829)
Mr F Davila (605817)

New allotments yield results from hard work

It was only last autumn when the first enthusiastic tenants moved on to their brand new allotments at the end of Chapel Lane. Basic work on clearing and laying out the site, including access paths and car parking, was undertaken by the Town Council, but it was then up to the tenants to get their plots in shape. Now all the hard work of preparing the ground is starting to show results, and green shoots are turning into this year's first crop. The sixty new allotments are on land leased by the council from Anglian Water after long and intense negotiations. So keen was the demand that there is still a waiting list. All part of efforts by so many people on 'greening Wymondham'.



Wymondham Town Council

How it works, what it does, where your money is spent

How does your Town Council work for you?

The 15 members of Wymondham Town Council are all unpaid volunteers, elected by Wymondham people every four years. Each year the councillors elect a Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

The full Town Council meets on the first Tuesday of every month. It receives questions from the public, and notes minutes from its committees and reports from representatives on outside bodies. It also approves all payments to suppliers from the preceding month and discusses issues relevant to the town

Some of the Town Council's functions are delegated to three main committees and these meet on Tuesdays in accordance with the schedule published in 'About Wymondham' and on the council website. Each committee consists of five members who elect their own chair and vice chair. These committees are

Leisure & Environment

This committee supervises the maintenance, upkeep and improvement of the Council's recreation areas such as Ketts Park, Browick Road recreation ground and the Spooner Row playing field. It is responsible for ensuring that play equipment meets health and safety requirements and that residents have access to leisure facilities. It is also responsible for other open spaces such as the Tolls Meadow nature reserve and the Becketswell amenity area. The committee also supports and promotes the 'Brighter Wymondham' initiative which it launched during 2006.

Taking a closer look at planning

Planning can be a complex and often contentious matter. The Town Council's Planning Lighting and Highways Committee works within a planning policy framework which explains how planning applications are dealt with, and how decisions are made.

South Norfolk Council has the final say in planning matters. Quite often they will delegate decisions to area sub-committees or, in some non contentious cases, to planning officers in consultation with local members. All applications are forwarded to the Town Council for comment, and details of these are posted

Planning Lighting and Highways

This committee liaises closely with Norfolk County Council and South Norfolk Council on all road, pavement and lighting issues affecting the Wymondham parish. It takes a strategic planning overview for the town and works in conjunction with the county and district councils. While it does not grant planning approvals (normally the responsibility of South Norfolk Council) the Town Council is consulted on all applications affecting Wymondham. Its remit also includes the Grade 1 listed Market Cross and the provision of Tourist Information Centre facilities provided by the council staff.

Finance & General Purposes

This committee manages property owned or leased by the Council including the cemetery, allotments and the chartered Friday market. It is also allocates funds under the Council's small grants scheme and is responsible for machinery purchases and the Council's administration team.

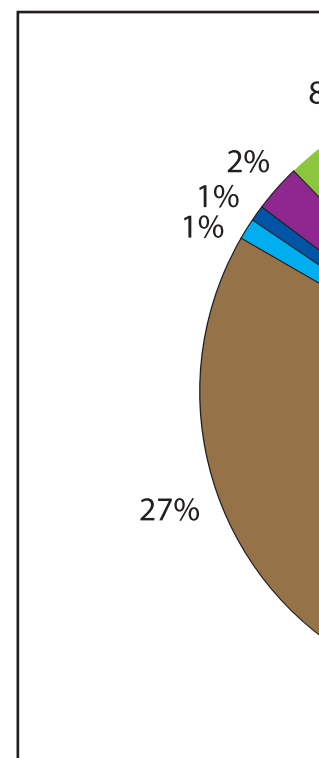
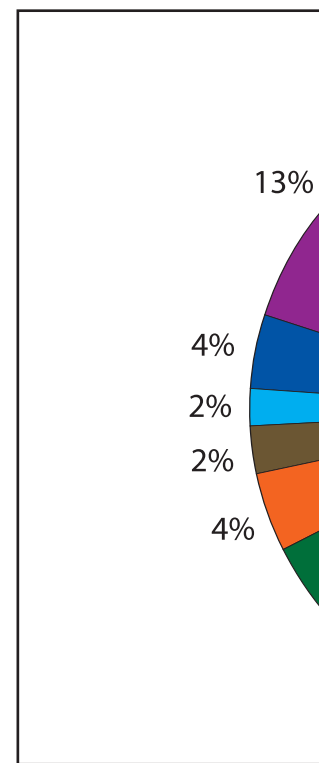
Agendas are posted on the Town Council notice board and agenda and minutes for council meetings are published on the council website, and these indicate the starting time. Public participation is allowed at all meetings at the allocated time.

on the council noticeboard. Plans are available for consultation in the office, or through the South Norfolk Council website, and considered at a council or committee meeting where they are on display for discussion.

Letters from the public commenting on applications are welcome, and there is always time at the start of meetings for public comments to be made in person. The Town Council will then comment to the district council in the light of the local plan and other policy guidance, taking into account any public comments and the considered views of its members.

Precept council

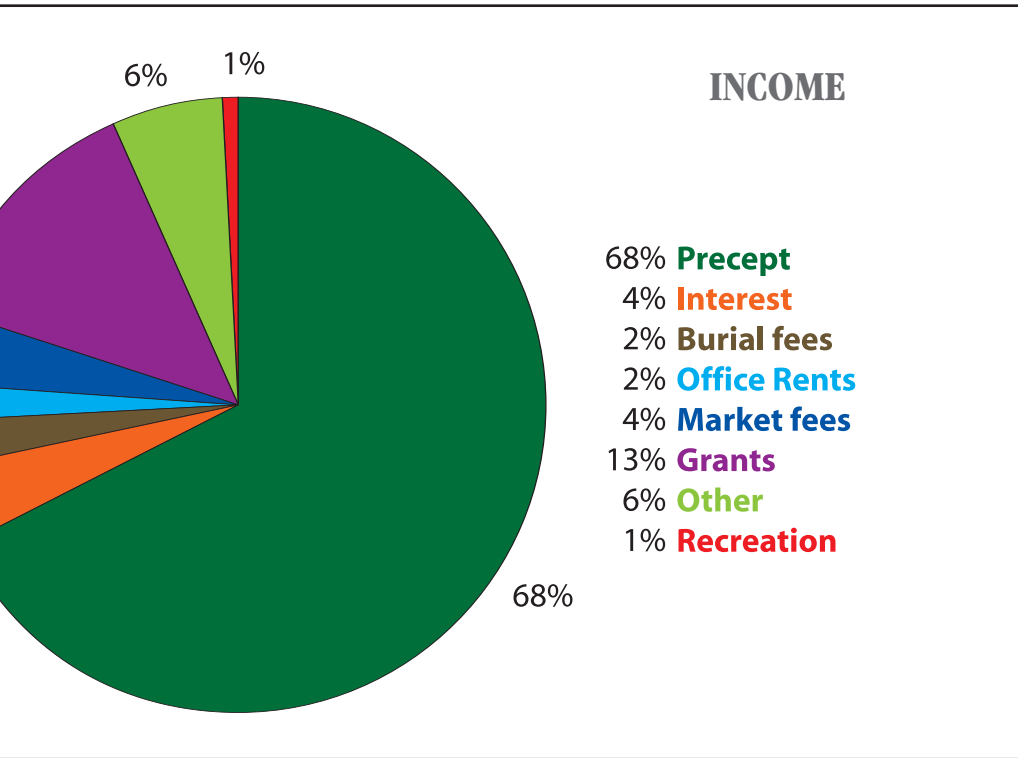
Where the money c



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ts, grants, income and expenditure – finances explained

comes from, and where it goes, are set out in these two diagrams:

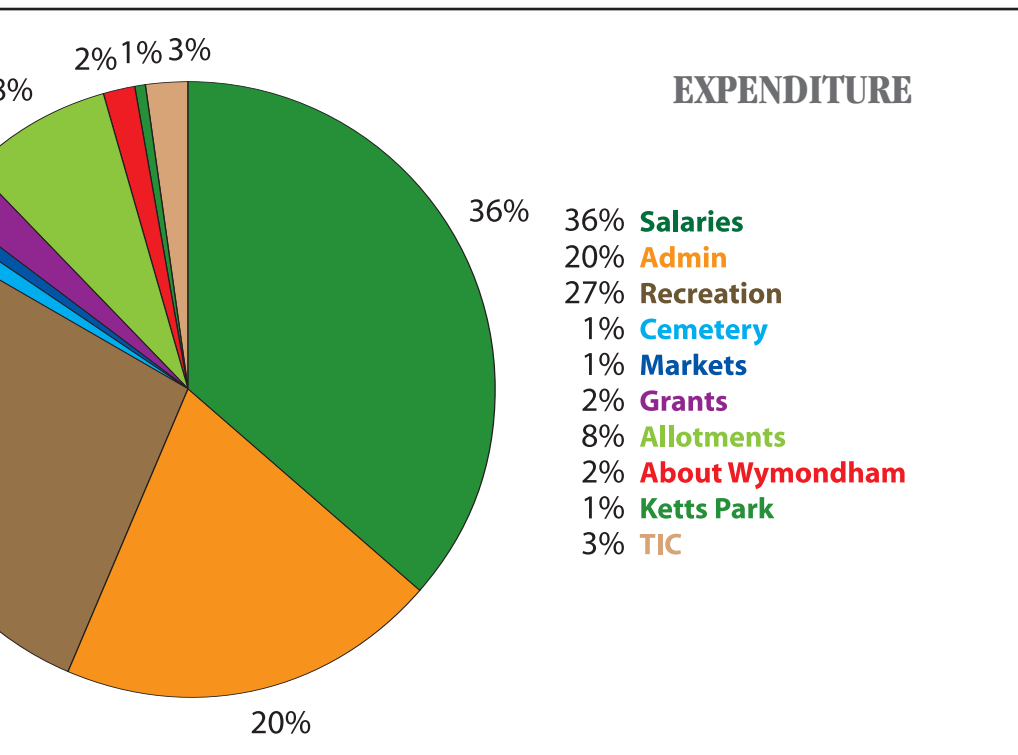


The Town Council is required by law to set a budget each year, which then determines how it is financed for that year.

Income is obtained from a number of sources such as burials, market fees, leisure activity fees, rents, grants and income on investments. It is also prudent for the Council to maintain a general reserve to cover emergencies, together with earmarked reserves for specific projects. The largest source of income is the precept. In the 2007-8 financial year this was £294,500 which equated to £61.50 per annum for a band 'D' property.

Expenditure included the costs of maintaining our offices at 14 Middleton Street and the salaries of the Town Clerk, administration support staff and groundsmen as well as the Tourist Information staff. The Town Council also maintains various amenity and play areas such as Ketts Park, Tolls Meadow and the Cemetery. Play equipment is being replaced as part of a rolling programme of refurbishment including the installation of a skateboard and BMX facility at Browick Road during 2007-8.

Another important part of our work has been in supporting local groups through our grants scheme. Each year the Town Council makes grants to local organisations to help with projects.



Grants were awarded in 2007-8 to

Citizens Advice Bureau	£2750
Wymondham Community Partnership	£2500
Wymondham Leg Club	£500
CCTV Camera	£528
Robert Kett School	£3000
Wymondham Youth Music	£200

Brightening Wymondham

Initiated by the Town Council, the 'Brighter Wymondham' scheme has really taken off this year through the leadership and hard work of a community group representing many local organisations.

Flower planters and other floral displays have bloomed throughout the town, and there have been tree planting and plant sharing schemes. Several litter-pick and tidy-up operations have been held and some of these have turned into real community celebrations, recently attracting the praise of Bill Bryson, chair of the Council for the Preservation of Rural England. The scheme is continuing vigorously into 2008-9.



Willing volunteers There was no shortage of help for last year's tidy-up organised by the Brighter Wymondham group

John Hayden Shield for 'green Wymondham'

There is a special section in the EDP's Pride in Norfolk Awards – the John Hayden Shield – for communities which have made the most of their green spaces, and Wymondham won the 2007 award.

Particular successes cited were the Town Council's nature reserve at Toll's Meadow, the Arts Forum's innovative Tiffey Trails project, the Lizard tower, projects at Browick for young people and the maintenance of open spaces surrounding the Abbey.

Skatepark and BMX track opened

In July the Mayor opened the new Skateboard and BMX facilities at Browick Road recreation ground.

This was the culmination of a lot of hard work by the council's Partnership, Projects and Funding Officer, councillors, youth workers and pupils at the High School who played an important part in the consultation and design process. It is part of a larger plan to develop Browick as an area for young people to get exercise in the open air, and is proving very successful.

Robert Kett School noticeboard

Robert Kett School pupils visit the Council Offices each year to hear about the council's work, and they have been interested in the board listing the names of past mayors.

The Town Council offered to provide a similar board at the school where notable pupils could be listed, and this was recently installed. It is a good way of strengthening links between the council and the school, and encouraging future citizens to take an interest in their community.

Civic award is a family event

The council presented its annual Civic Award to husband and wife team Kate and John Wood for many years community work in a variety of areas.

Kate was chair of the Ashcroft women's charity and still chairs Wymondham Learning Centre, and John is chair of Wymondham Music Festival and the Tiffey Trails project. All their children and many of their grandchildren were there to make the presentation a real family event.



And lots more!

Other activities in a very full year of council work include

- supporting developments at Toll's Meadow including a new Tiffey Trails viewing tower
- supporting the Abbey 900 celebrations including the historic bronze model in the Market Place
- developing the Town Council website
- Mayor's Charity grants awarded

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