

Wymondham Town Council

Annual Report 2008-9



What the Town Council has been doing for Wymondham in the past year June 2009

Mayor looks back on two years in office



Cllr Len Elston, Town Mayor 2007-09

It has been an honour and a privilege to serve a second term of office as the Town Mayor, though I did wonder what I had done to deserve this, and why my fellow Councillors had taken the decision to reappoint me in May 2008.

At least this time I was not entering uncharted waters, and having learnt the appropriate protocols and the art of polite conversation I was able to take a deep breath and look forward to an enjoyable year. There is a warm satisfaction in being able to walk through the Town Centre and be recognised by so many residents who want to talk about our fantastic community spirit and the wonderful events that take place throughout the year.

This report gives you a perspective of some of the activities undertaken by the Town Council on your behalf, ranging from consultations on planning issues to the provision of new play equipment. I am especially proud that the hard work of my fellow councillors and the Council's staff was rewarded by the attainment of Quality Status, which will allow us to undertake a wider range of services at a more local level.

I have received a number of favourable comments about the refurbishment of the footpaths in the cemetery, making it much safer to visit loved ones' graves, and tree maintenance undertaken following a survey which helped the Council to retain important wildlife habitats. continued inside

Town Councillors

Or more appropriately, in a review of 2008-9, who were the councillors during the past year? Two councillors left the council during the year, and the 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

Mrs D M Hockaday (603087)
Mr J H Turner (607615)
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)

Quality Council recognised

Last Autumn Wymondham Town Council celebrated the award of Quality Council status after going through the extensive and detailed work required to make the case. Having satisfied the many requirements of the award (including publishing a quarterly newsletter and an annual report, where About Wymondham has been pleased to play its part) the final step was to have a town clerk with the appropriate professional qualification, the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CILCA).

Both Wymondham's Town Clerk Trevor Gurney and his counterpart in Attleborough, Hilary Elias, had studied over the previous 18 months, providing each other with regular checks and encouragement along the way. They both qualified at the same time, and the two councils' submissions were submitted on the same day. Both councils have now achieved Quality Status.

Congratulations to the two clerks and the two councils for striving for and achieving recognition of their excellent performance.



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 takes questions from the public, notes minutes from its committees and receives 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, which 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.

Planning Lighting and Highways 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 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.

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 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 time is always allowed 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.

Mayor looks back on two years in office *continued*

Personal highlights of the year included the Dickensian Evening and St Georges Day celebrations organised by my Wymondham Lions colleagues, and I would like to thank them for all their hard work. The new library is a real asset to the town, and is a wonderful example of partnership work between the County Council, South Norfolk Council, Town Council and Wymondham Town Football Club.

It was also a pleasure raising funds for two very worthwhile local groups - the Wymondham Leg Club and the Day Care Centre at Town Green. It is only when you visit them that you fully appreciate the tremendous work undertaken by volunteers and health care professionals.

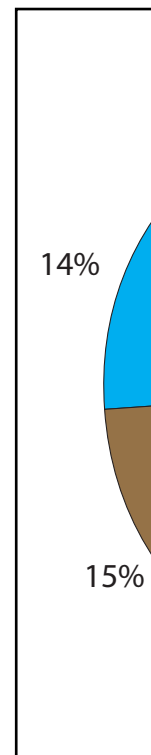
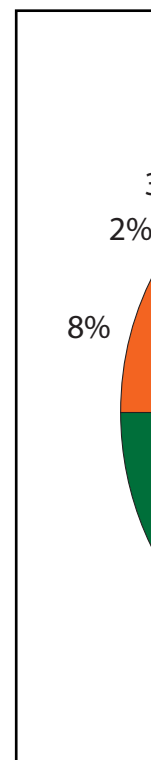
We live in constantly changing times and the prospect of new housing developments will bring a new set of pressures and demands. I am pleased that a new doctors' surgery with increased capacity is under construction. I am sure that my fellow councillors are committed to representing your views and will always put 'Wymondham First' when making decisions on your behalf.

Finally can I say a big thankyou to everybody who has supported me over the last two years, especially my long suffering wife, and best wishes to my successor, Cllr. Peter Broome.

Pre

COU

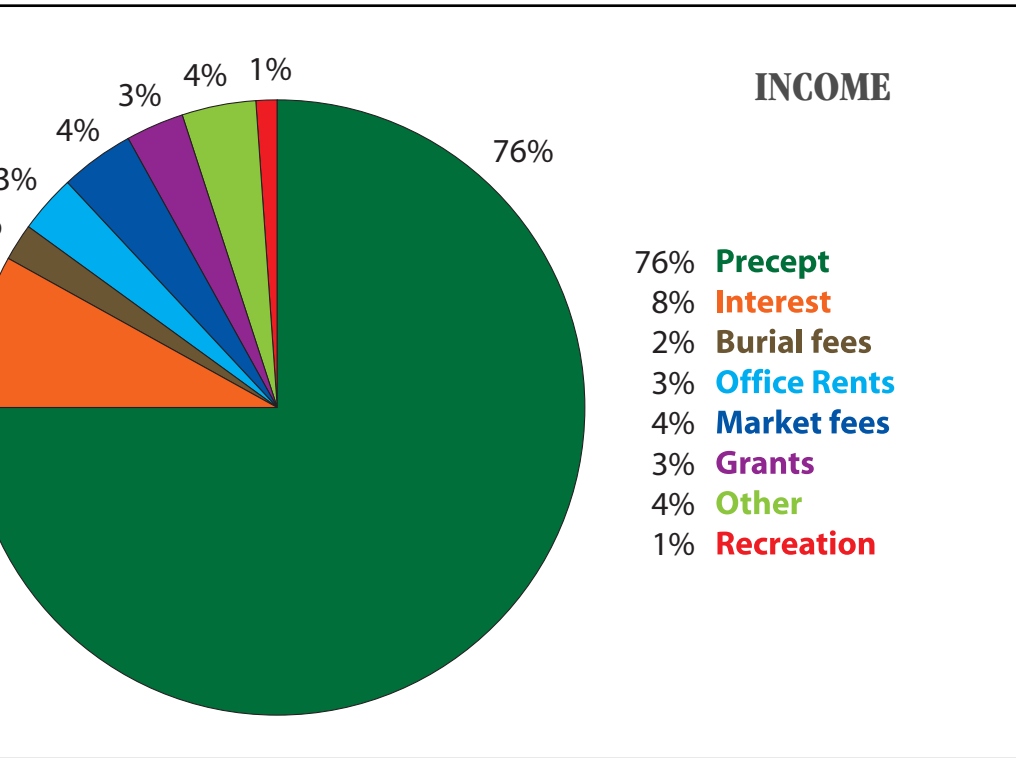
Where th



Annual Report 2008-9

Receipts, grants, income and expenditure – Council finances explained

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

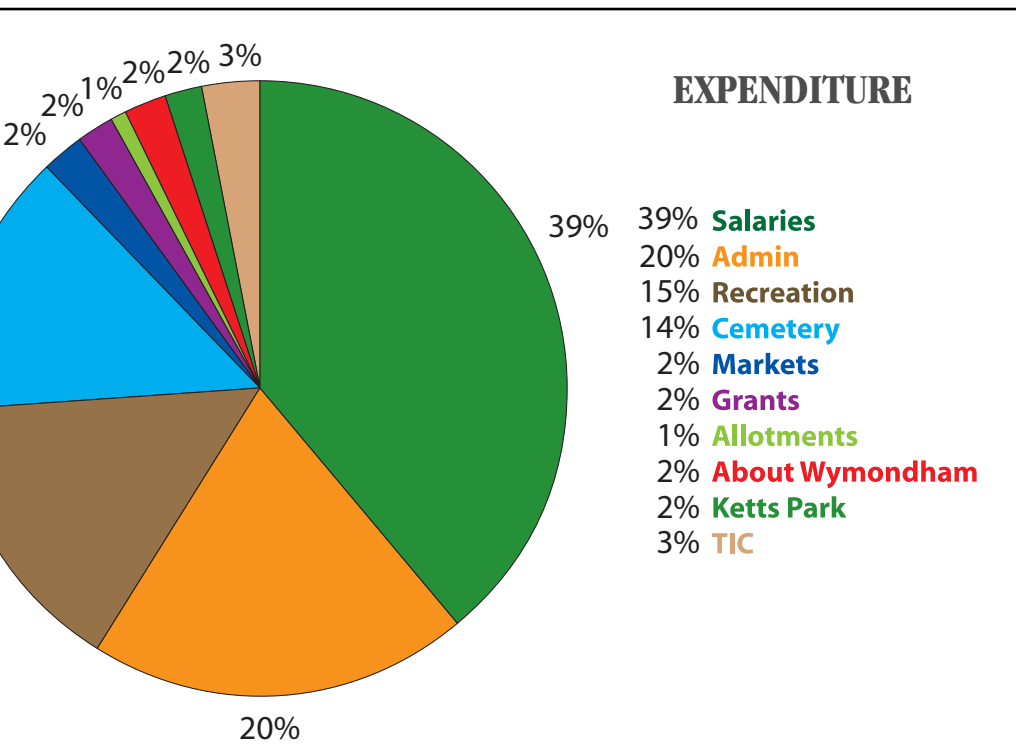


The Town Council is required by law to set a budget each year, which then determines how it is financed for that year.

Income is obtained from a number of sources such as market fees, leisure activity fees, burials, 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, which in the 2008-9 financial year was £317,230 which equated to £64.59 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 replaced as part of a rolling programme of refurbishment, with extensive works carried out during 2008-9.

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 2008-9 to

Citizens Advice Bureau	£3000
Wymondham Music Festival (for 2008)	£1000
Wymondham Leg Club	£500
Rothbury Social Club	1000
Robert Kett School	£2384.84
Wymondham Nature Group	£218
Wymondham Scouts	£226
Wymondham Music Festival (for 2009)	£1500
Total	£9828.84

Mayor's Charity gives £1,200

Established several years ago, the Mayor's Charity invites donations and raises money through fundraising events, notably this year a successful Quiz and Chips evening at the Central Hall which raised over £400.

Each year the Mayor nominates one or more organisations which will benefit, and he was pleased to present £600 each to the Town Green Day Care Centre and to the newly formed Wymondham Leg Club.



Grant benefits Leg Club – members of the club with health care professionals, carers and friends receive the town council's grant cheque from the Mayor at a recent meeting

Civic award for museum stalwarts

The Council made its 2008 Civic Award to historians Adrian and Anne Hoare, who joined Wymondham Heritage Society in 1984 and quickly became involved in its museum work.

Adrian was elected as museum committee chairman in 2000, a post he still holds today. Each year Adrian and Anne arrange new and varied displays at the museum including the Kett exhibition in 1999, the Americans around Wymondham, the Damgate Story and History along the Tiffey. Their efforts were recognised in 2001 when the Museum won the Berry Savory Tourism Award.

In presenting the Civic Award, Town Mayor Cllr. Len Elston praised the couple for their dedication. He said: "In recognition of their commitment to making the museum a success and their contribution to community life, the Town Council was pleased to confer this prestigious award".



Top award for Tourist Office

Wymondham's very special Tourist Information Office won a coveted County award as Norfolk's best visitor information centre.

At the awards ceremony for the EDP's annual tourism awards the citation said: 'Winning this award is recognition of the continuing efforts of the TIC team to provide an informative and welcoming visit to the unique 17th century Market cross, and to promote Wymondham to the surrounding area.'



And lots more!

Other activities in a full year include

- consulting and responding on planning issues
- supporting a new Youth Café in the Rothbury Community Centre
- upgrading and improving play equipment in four town play areas

Wymondham Town Council

14 Middleton Street

Wymondham

Norfolk NR18 0AD

Telephone 01953 603302

wymondhamtc.norfolkparishes.gov.uk

www.wymondhamonline.co.uk