

# Wymondham Town Council

## Annual Report 2017-18



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

June 2018

## Busy second term for Mayor

**My second term as Mayor has been just as enjoyable as my first one, back in 2012-13. The year has been a busy one with many events to attend and several major council projects to progress.**

Events include the re-dedication of the Town Green Centre on its 25th anniversary with both the original builder and Pam Rhodes, who originally opened the centre, present; Speech Day at Wymondham College with guest speaker Richard Bacon MP; formal opening of the Morley Beer Festival jointly with the Mayor of Attleborough, Cllr. Jeremy Burton; the opening of the refurbished Boars public house at Spooner Row; membership of the panel awarding prizes at the Town Carnival; laying a wreath on Remembrance Sunday on behalf of the people of our parish and various civic receptions from other councils around Norfolk.



Mayor Robert Savage presents the Civic Award to Dianne Fernee for her work in support of dementia organisations. Full story on page four of this annual report.

### Town Councillors who served this year

The following councillors served as council members during 2017-18.

#### Abbey Ward

K Hurn, R Savage, P Stearn

#### Cromwells Ward

J Halls, J Hornby, A Osborne/S Nuri

#### Northfields Ward

C Longhurst, J Mooney, D Underwood

#### Rustens Ward

P Broome, A Holden, S Sayer

#### Town Ward

I Flatt, L Hornby, S Wyer

I was especially pleased to return to visit residents at Ogden Court on the occasion of their celebration of St George's Day where I was able to view a rose bush I planted in 2012 to commemorate the celebration of the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's accession to the throne; and there were many other events too numerous to mention.

Projects include progressing the new council offices at Ketts Park, refurbishment of the town centre toilets, a partnership with SNC to provide a 3G pitch and enhanced tennis and parking facilities, and adoption of street lights from South Norfolk Council.

I was delighted to present a Civic Award to Dianne Fernee for her tireless work in aid of the Dementia Support Group. Dianne thoroughly deserves this award, having had a significant involvement in setting up the group when she was Mayor and expanding the dementia angels in Norfolk.

The council continues to support voluntary groups within the town with the award of grants to local organisations listed in this publication, to help them provide facilities for the benefit of all residents of Wymondham.

**Robert Savage, Town Mayor**

# 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. Elections took place in May 2015 so that 2017-18 was the third year of office for the council. Each year the councillors elect a Mayor and Deputy Mayor from among their members.**

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, the Becketswell amenity area and the allotments.

**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.

**Finance & General Purposes** manages property owned or leased by the Council including the cemetery 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. Its remit also includes the Grade 1 listed Market Cross and the provision of Tourist Information Centre facilities provided by the council staff.

**Agendas are posted on the Town Council notice board and agendas 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.**

## Town Council's new premises - plans moving forward

**Last winter we reported that after more than 40 years in increasingly unsuitable accommodation, the Town Council was starting to think about establishing new premises on its own land, saving on rent, maintenance and running costs.**

We promised to keep you informed on progress. Preliminary discussion reached the stage where it was possible to draw up draft plans, and four firms of architects were invited to bid for the project. The council appointed Vincent and Gorbing, who have relevant experience, having designed the new offices for Costessey Town Council. A working group of councillors was set up, with the intention of making a planning application to South Norfolk Council in the New Year.

When approved, the plans will be displayed on the Town Council website [www.wymondhamtc@norfolkparishes.gov.uk](http://www.wymondhamtc@norfolkparishes.gov.uk), and in the council offices in Middleton Street. The council hopes in the next few years to have new premises which will benefit Wymondham's council tax payers, and the councillors and staff who serve them, after establishing new premises on its own land at Ketts Park.

## A closer look at planning

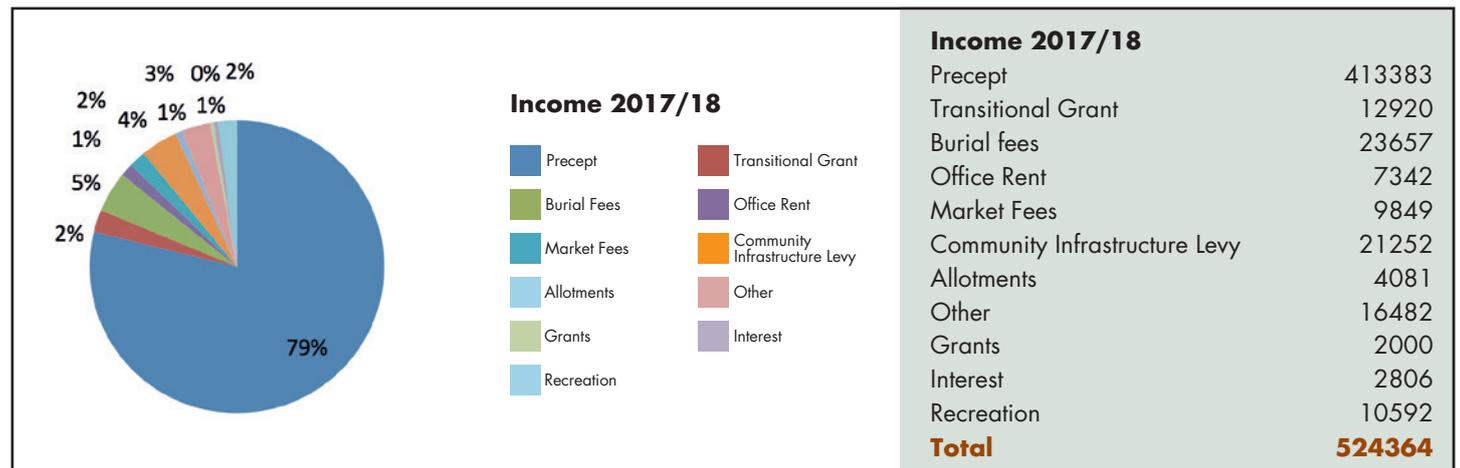
**Planning can be a complex and often contentious matter. The Town Council's Planning Lighting and Highways Committee works within a planning policy framework which explains how planning applications are dealt with, and how decisions are made.**

South Norfolk Council has the final say in planning matters. Sometimes its Planning Committee will delegate decisions on appropriate cases to planning officers in consultation with local members. All applications are forwarded first to the Town Council for comment, and details of applications 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.

## Precepts, grants, income and expenditure – council finances explained

Where 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 2017-18 financial year was £413,383 which was received together with a transitional grant of £12,920 from Central Government. For the present 2018-19 financial year the precept has been set at £449,280 with a transitional grant of £6,577.

Expenditure included the costs of maintaining the council 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. Grounds keeping equipment is replaced as part of a rolling programme.

Another important part of the council's work is in supporting local groups through our grants scheme. Each year the Town Council makes grants to local organisations to help with projects. Grants awarded in 2017-18 are shown in the box to the right.

### Grants List 2017/18

Light Up Wymondham	3000
Citizens Advice	3000
Wym Dementia Support Group	877.50
Wymondham Music Festival	1510
Slow Theatre Company	450
Wymondham Business Group	300
<b>Total</b>	<b>9137.50</b>

# Changing shopping habits lead markets decline



**See you at the market:** Wymondham's markets offer good value for money, as well as a meeting place for friends and neighbours

**Regular users of Wymondham's markets will have noticed a slow decline in the level of market place shopping. There is a reduction in the number of market traders – people's shopping habits are changing as cheap retail outlets increasingly meet their needs.**

Our Farmers' Markets offer direct access to the local producers who provide genuinely local produced food and drink. But often cheap price is the main consideration for shoppers, and it's hard for traders to compete with the supermarkets.

Markets in most other small towns are noting a similar decline, and it's the same even for the largest markets, like Norwich and Yarmouth. The Town Council provides an attractive venue for both kinds of market, with council staff providing support services.

We should remember that all our markets offer a regular service for everyone, and in particular those who find getting out of town to do their shopping difficult. And our markets provide regular social meeting places for local people.

We should all use our Wymondham town markets whenever we can, and play our part in keeping them lively and successful.

## Civic Award for Dianne Fernee

**Dianne Fernee was elected to Wymondham Town Council in 2011 and subsequently for 2013-14. During this time she was instrumental in setting up Wymondham Business Group, as the previous Chamber of Commerce had dissolved.**

It was during her year as Mayor that she became involved in Dementia Support for the town including giving assistance to the Pabulum café, and in conjunction with Age Concern, established a tool-kit and training for local businesses which became the benchmark to be used throughout Norfolk. Since then she has been a committed member of the support group and her good work, together with that of all the helpers here, resulted in a Queen's Voluntary Service Award being received in 2017.

The growth of the Wymondham Dementia Support Group has been phenomenal, starting with some six couples eight years ago and with over 80 couples at the present time.

She was also heavily involved in the battle to save Admiral Dementia Nurses and, thanks to her efforts together with other campaigners, the foundation has now been made for a sustainable nursing service.

For her sterling community service work Mayor Cllr Robert Savage was pleased to present Dianne with a Town Council Civic Award.

## And lots more!

Many other Town Council activities during the year included supporting proposals to seek a Heritage Lottery Fund grant to restore and extend Becket's Chapel, proposals for a new cemetery to provide much needed burial space and many other projects.

Back copies of 'About Wymondham' may be found on the Town Council website at **wymondhamtc.norfolkparishes.gov.uk**