

Mayor reflects on twelve months in office



Cllr. Coulin Foulger,
Town Mayor in 2010-11

Back in May 2010 my fellow councillors bestowed on me the honour of electing me as Mayor and Chairman of Wymondham Town Council.

As proud as I was in accepting the honour, little did I know what the following twelve months had in store for me! I was stepping into uncharted waters and what for me began with a certain amount of trepidation, became a real pleasure, as well as very rewarding, by the end of my term of office.

I had the privilege of representing our wonderful town at many civic functions throughout the county, where I was able to see how other councils carried out their work. I sincerely believe that our residents have much to be proud about in Wymondham.

This annual report will give you a flavour of some of the activities undertaken by the Town Council over the last year on your behalf, and the contributions we have been able to make to ensure that Wymondham continues to thrive and prosper.

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Who are your Town Councillors?

Or more appropriately, in a review of 2010-11, who were the councillors during the past year? After a four-year term of office, the following councillors served until the May 2011 local government elections.

Abbey Ward

Mr S N Dumbrell
Mr D W S Fletcher
Mr A N Howell

Cromwells Ward

Mr N Ward
Mrs D Hockaday
Mr J Turner

Northfields Ward

Mr L C Elston
Mr M J Gibbins
Mr J F Mooney

Rustens Ward

Mr K J Cooper
Mr C Foulger
Mr M R Goldspink

Town Ward

Ms A Andrews
Mr P N Broome
Mr F Davila

Ten years of Farmers' Markets

'First and best in Norfolk' is the proud claim of everyone associated with Wymondham's farmers markets, which celebrated their tenth anniversary last summer.

The markets were set up in March 2000 as a joint project between the Town Council, Wymondham Development Partnership and local farmers. The aims were to provide local produce and support local farmers, make better use of the Market Place and encourage Wymondham people and visitors to shop in town.

The markets, the first to be held in Norfolk, have been held regularly at least once a month since 2000 and are very popular. In 2003 the Wymondham markets were voted best in Norfolk in the EDP Norfolk Magazine annual Food Awards.

Cllr David Fletcher led the organising team throughout the ten-year period. He said: "One of the main reasons for the markets' success has been teamwork between stallholders and organisers to promote the venture. The markets seem to thrive whatever the weather, and their sustained success owes much to the excellent support we receive from our customers."

Wymondham Farmers Market is open between 9am and 1pm on the third Saturday of each month.



Welcome! The mayor welcomes Mid-Norfolk MP George Freeman at a recent market

Wymondham Town Council

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

Mayor reflects on twelve months in office *continued*

It was wonderful meeting so many varied and interesting people throughout the year but particularly when we were trying to raise funds for the Mayor's Community Fund.

This year I chose the cancer charity Star Throwers as well as the Wymondham Parkinsons Society. I thank all those people who gave such generous help in aid of these good causes.

In these efforts I must pay particular tribute to my wife Carole who helped and supported me at all times throughout the year, but especially when on her own she raised over £350 by baking her fabulous cup cakes to sell at the Farmers Market.

I must also give a big thank you to the Town Clerk and his staff for all their help during the year, because I know that without their support I could not have carried out my duties as effectively.

Finally I would like to extend my best wishes to my successor Cllr. Neil Ward.

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. For these councillors, 2010-11 was the last year of their term of office. 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, 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. 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

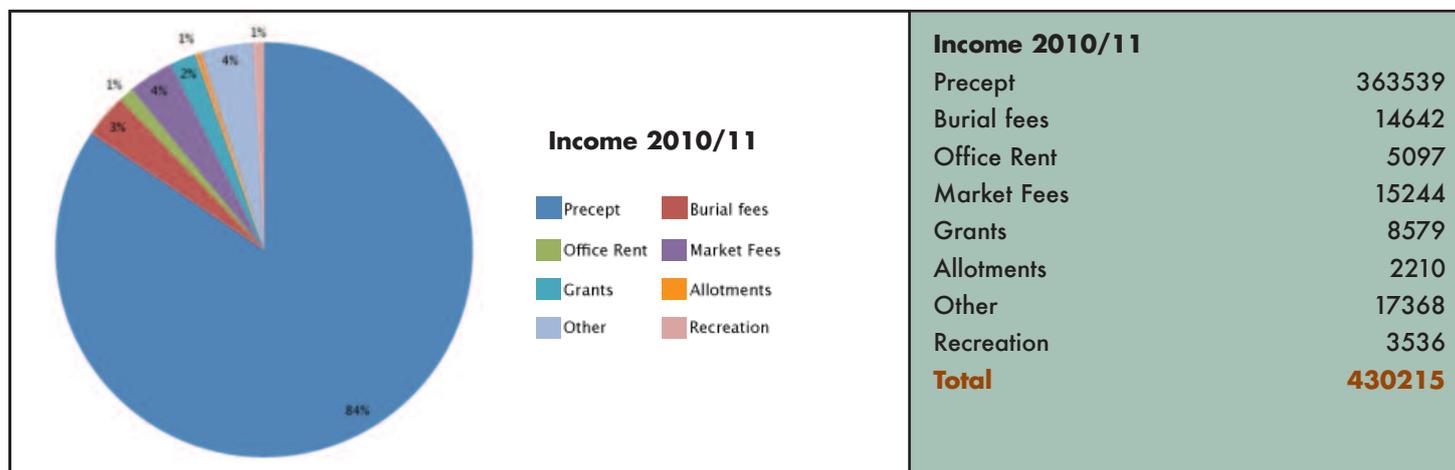
Planning can be a complex and often contentious matter. The Town Council's Planning Lighting and Highways Committee works within a planning policy framework which explains how planning applications are dealt with, and how decisions are made.

South Norfolk Council has the final say in planning matters. 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 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.

Precepts, grants, income and expenditure-council finances explained

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



Precept	363539
Burial fees	14642
Office Rent	5097
Market Fees	15244
Grants	8579
Allotments	2210
Other	17368
Recreation	3536
Total	430215



Salaries	150962
Administration	86418
Recreation	50876
Cemetery	10577
Markets	26695
Grants	13450
Allotments	4227
About Wymondham	8884
Ketts Park	15098
TIC	13919
Total	381106

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 2010-11 financial year was £363,539, equating to £64.59** check figure** per annum for a band 'D' property.

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. Play equipment is replaced as part of a rolling programme of refurbishment.

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 were awarded in 2010-11 to...

Citizens Advice	3000
Pabulum Cafe	1000
Busy Bees Playgroup	2000
Central Hall	5000
Wymondham Arts Forum	2300
Wymondham Pensioners Ass	150
Total	13450



Civic award for Town Archivist

At the Annual General Meeting of the Wymondham Archive Group the Mayor of Wymondham, Cllr. Colin Foulger, was pleased to present the 2010 Civic Award to Janet Smith to mark her retirement as the Town Archivist.

In 1989, when Janet retired as Wymondham's librarian, she was invited by the Town Council to sort out its records and to create an archive - a natural extension of her previous work in collating information about the Town. The death of local solicitor, Bernard Gledhill, ten years ago resulted in his family depositing a large quantity of documents with the Town Council and the formal creation of an archive group, which has kept busy under Janet's leadership ever since. Besides the archive, Janet is well known for her work with Wymondham Heritage Society, and she is in great demand for the historical talks she has given all over Norfolk.

Over 30 friends and colleagues attended the meeting to celebrate her retirement and to congratulate long-serving volunteer Mary Garner who has agreed to become the new Town Archivist. Janet is shown in the picture with Mary (left) and Town Archive Group chair Richard Fowle.

Mayor's Community Fund gives out £2000

2010-11 was a bumper year for the Mayor's Community Fund, with £2,000 allocated to local good causes. Established several years ago, the fund invites donations and raises money through fundraising events.

This year the main fundraisers were a fireworks party, a dog show at Kett's Park, a fashion show in the Fairland Church Centre and a quiz and chips event in the Central Hall, with the sale of cup cakes at farmers' markets adding to the total.

Each year the Mayor nominates one or more organisations which will benefit, and he was pleased to present £1,000 each to Star Throwers and the Wymondham branch of Parkinsons UK.



And lots more!

Other activities in the year include replacement of Market Place bollards and installing Browick recreation ground lighting.

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

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