



WAREHAM TOWN COUNCIL - ANNUAL REPORT FOR CIVIC YEAR 2007/08

The Annual Report of Wareham Town Council for Civic Year 2007/2008 featuring its achievements over the year is presented herewith. Further information about the Town Council, its responsibilities and its activities is available on the Town Council's website, the address of which is www.wareham-tc.gov.uk. The website includes minutes of meetings of the Town Council and useful contact details.

Rodney Curtis
Town Clerk

1st May 2008

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2008

(Figures are subject to audit and are exclusive of VAT and adjusted for journals)

	<u>INCOME</u>	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>
Balance in hand as at 1 April 2007	162,888.60	
Precept 2007/8	87,930.00	
Policy Resources & Finance		
Salaries incl. Employment Arbitration and Pensions		89,201.39
Grants incl Donations (S137)	1,256.40	2,050.00
Lease & Rent	28,982.32	
Interest on Deposit/Savings Accounts	6,758.98	
CCTV		2,060.00
Other Income/Expenditure	7,730.80	37,286.75
Amenities		
Howards Lane Car Park	48,440.12	9,032.15
Recreation Ground	2,629.61	8,595.87
Hauses Field/Northmoor Park/ Tantinoby Lane Redevelopment	74,019.73	82,276.55
Other Income/Expenditure		33,747.77
Council & Civic Matters		
Beating of the Bounds	624.00	612.00
Other Income/Expenditure		5,186.11
Wareham in Bloom		
Income/Expenditure	4,393.00	3,981.63
Museum		
Donations	967.20	
Grants	950.00	
Items sold in Museum	833.08	748.64
New Equipment		523.40
Other Income/Expenditure	764.26	3,899.12
Capital Receipts/Expenditure		29,422.65
TOTALS	429,168.10	308,624.03
Less Expenditure	308,624.03	
Closing Balance as at 31 March 2008	120,544.07	

Wareham Town Council Achievements - 2007/08

REPORT

Amenities Committee

1. The prestigious Hauses Field community open space project was finished and was officially opened on 14th July 2007. From September 2006, the Council worked in partnership with the Wareham and District Development Trust, the Wareham Town Trust, Dorset Community Action and local residents and volunteers to deliver a scheme that local people said they wanted, following extensive consultation. The people of north Wareham now have a superb new play area, a sensory garden, a bmx facility, new netball/basketball net and picnic tables and benches in place of an area that was previously overgrown and subject to anti-social behaviour. Monitoring and regular site visits maintain the Council's commitment to this valuable site.
2. Drax Avenue play area was totally refurbished at a cost of £27,000 from Council funding without any grant assistance and was officially opened by the then Minister of Local Government and Community Cohesion, Mr Phil Woolas, during his visit to the town on 11th June 2007. He also visited Hauses Field, St. Martin's Church, the Town walls and the Town Museum.
3. On the Recreation Ground a new football rebound facility and basketball net was provided fitted on the old tennis courts along with a basketball net at the other end. Apart from football facilities, this is now regularly used by a local basketball team for practice sessions.
4. During the year, the sports pavilion at the Recreation Ground had all its windows replaced, new shutters fitted and anti graffiti paint sprayed on the exterior walls, following a spate of vandalism. The football pitch was turned round to facilitate restoration and reseeded of the goal mouth areas and will be restored back to its old position on the field at the start of the next football season. The fencing at the northern end of the playing fields is due for replacement with new bow top fencing and there will be a new retaining wall.
5. Also at the Recreation Ground, the Committee supported the Wareham Carnival Committee who held Carnival events entirely on that site in 2007, including a fun fair for the first time for many years.
6. The Committee selected a new play scheme for Mistover Road play area and put in a bid to Viridor Waste Management landfill credits scheme for funding. If successful, the equipment to be installed contains a large recycled material element and is very bright and cheerful, aimed at younger children since there is a Mother and Toddler group who use Carey Hall and a Nursery in Carey Road who both use the existing facilities.

7. During the year, work on the Town Hall exterior was carried out. The interior roof bracing was completed to strengthen the east end wall, to prevent bulging. The east end gable wall and chimney have been repaired outside and the chimney reduced to roof level as it was leaning and was unsafe. Two other chimneys were removed at the same time and the roof re-slatted in accordance with the Building Surveyors report, on health and safety grounds. Plans for phase three are going ahead in the spring of 2009, when the North and East Street frontages will be inspected and repaired as necessary, including the clock tower.
8. Inside the Corn exchange, the old dais was removed and new flexible staging purchased. The floor in the Corn Exchange has been cleaned, then sanded down and re-varnished. New, temporary flooring will be installed where there is now bare concrete. At a later date there are plans to replace this with matching wooden flooring.
9. The lobby entrance to the Admin office on the first floor was removed and extra working space created with the addition of badly needed storage cabinets and a new work surface to be installed shortly.
10. The Committee agreed to fund a redecoration of the interior of the Town Hall this coming financial year, particularly for the Corn exchange, and quotations are being gathered for work to begin in September 2008.
11. The Committee also considered an interesting survey of Howards Lane Car Park usage, slightly increased hire charges by 2% at the Recreation Ground and put in place an electrical periodic test and inspection at the Town Hall and adjoining Safe Partnership offices, plus new fire risk assessments for the Town Hall, Sports Pavilion and the premises at 2 Mill Lane.

Policy, Resources and Finance Committee

1. The Town Council has a duty to maximise income for the Town Council from all of its assets. This year, the Committee was heavily involved in negotiating new leases for its Purbeck View Park property over a ten year period and on the Safe Partnership premises adjoining the Town Hall in East Street for a further five years. The annual rental for the Swanage and Wareham Rugby Club playing fields area is currently being reviewed and an increase has been set for the new financial year.
2. The scale of charges for the Corn Exchange was also reviewed this year following concerns that clients were being lost possibly due to higher charges than some other premises available locally. There is now a two tier scale of charges and this appears to be attracting more bookings.
3. Donations of funding to various organisations under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 and other powers were made by Wareham Town Council this year, totalling £2050. The Committee authorised grants to: Age Concern, Dorset County Council, Live Music Now project, the Wareham

Branch Royal British Legion, Grapevine, the Keep Military Museum, Vitalise, Wareham Carnival Committee, Wareham Seniors Forum, Wareham Father Christmas/Christmas Lights, and the Wareham Town Band.

4. This year an additional three CCTV cameras were fitted, one on the Quay, one on the railway flyover at the A351 and one at the Worgret Road roundabout. After a great deal of delay these are now fully operational and various Councillors and members of the public visited the Police Station on 7th April 2007 to view newly upgraded equipment and the resulting pictures. All the cameras have now been digitalised to give greater clarity. Following the visit, and local representations, it is possible that another camera may be purchased solely to give 24 hour coverage of Sandford Lane.
5. During the year, three internal auditor's reports were received and it was very pleasing to note that only minor comments were noted for action. Early in 2008, one audit report gave a highly satisfactory 'nothing to report at this stage', for the first time in the Council's history, according to the chairman.
6. The Council's Risk Assessment was considered in September 2007 and looked at risk identification, internal controls, internal audit testing etc and any negative aspects that had been highlighted, however there were no significant comments and it was duly accepted.
7. Information technology - in September 2007, the Committee accepted a quotation to link up the Museum computers with the Town Council's network, following a donation of £500 from Dorset County Council.
8. Later in the year, under the 'Connecting Dorset' scheme administered by Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils, the Council secured a new laptop computer, printer, docking station and wireless router and associated software, estimated value £1600, which will shortly be available for use by members of the public under certain conditions.
9. Following allocation of budget funds, there are plans to purchase a digital projector this coming year to help with projection of online plans at Planning and Transport Committee meetings and for general use in presentations.
10. In October 2007, the Committee accepted a new Audit Plan following the recommendations of an internal audit working party, which clearly lays out the areas to be covered in any internal audit. The Plan, with one suggested addition, was later accepted at Town Council for implementation.
11. During the year, a training session in accounts was held for Members, run by the Finance Assistant, Roger Jones.
12. An agreement for the leasing of land to the Northmoor Allotments Association for a further five years was concluded with effect from 27th November 2007,

and, following a later meeting with allotment representatives, the Committee agreed that there should be no change to current financial arrangements between the Council and the allotment site management committee. A site visit to the allotment sites is planned in the summer months.

Planning and Transport Committee

1. The Committee has met 11 times in 2006/2007 and considered 118 planning applications for which views were sought by the Planning Authority, Purbeck District Council.
2. During the year, permission was recommended for a combined new Scout and Guide hut at North Bestwall Road, Wareham, a long overdue facility which will give local young people a new home that they can be proud of.
3. The Committee also considered another major development at the Old Granary Bar/Restaurant at the Quay which has been completely refurbished during the winter months and will be a major attraction at this well loved tourist spot.
4. The Committee considered a large development at 9 Westport Road of 6 houses, 2 bungalows and 3 flats and gave their recommendations to Purbeck District Council.
5. A further development of 5 detached dwellings with garages at 32, 34, 36 and 42 Worgret Road was also considered and the views of the committee were made known to the District Council.
6. Because of proposed changes in the procedures of the Planning Board at Purbeck District Council, the Planning and Transport Committee made arrangements to meet three weekly instead of once every four weeks. However, after protests from the smaller Parish Councils in Purbeck, it is possible that this may be altered in due course and details are awaited of any further action by the District Council in this matter.
7. A number of transport issues were discussed during the year, since no scheme will be approved by Dorset County Council without local parish or town council support. During the year, additional double yellow lines at Connegar Lane were supported, following an approach from the Burials Joint Committee who were experiencing frustrating delays and road blockages for hearses during funerals.
8. It is planned for a review of all transport and parking issues highlighted by many local residents to take place during a forthcoming meeting.

Wareham in Bloom Committee

1. The biggest achievement of Wareham this year was to win GOLD in the Britain in Bloom South and South East Regional competition, for 'Best Small Town' in an area stretching from Dorset to Kent. There were 14 other small

towns in this category. Wareham also won the best overall in this category and the Chairman's award in the South area for the Hauses Field project. This meant that Wareham was invited by Britain in Bloom to enter the National competition, and is now busy preparing for 10th August when it will be competing against small towns throughout the UK – quite an achievement! Congratulations are extended to Councillor Eric Osmond and Councillor Mrs Mary Wainwright and the rest of the Wareham in Bloom Committee plus all sponsors and volunteers for this achievement and for all their hard work.

2. The mammoth effort that this invitation entails started with twelve trees being planted by children from the Lady St Mary First School and Councillors on the north side of the Recreation ground on 20th December 2007 - these are now growing very well and will certainly enhance the area in years to come.
3. The Lady St Mary First School has agreed to involve the children in a planting scheme on the triangle of land at their school entrance. The Middle School is in the process of establishing a green classroom on the site of the old swimming pool. They are creating habitats and planting flowers and vegetables and have said that they will provide photographs for the Judges' portfolio.
4. Work is planned to tidy up the Town Pound with the help of the Court Leet and plant it with bedding plants to brighten it up ready for judging day.
5. The Wareham Town Trust offered support to Wareham in Bloom this year and on 9th March organised a litter pick on the walls which certainly tidied up that area. Wareham in Bloom members went along and helped on that occasion. The Trust will be involved in further sessions to improve Wareham's appearance during the coming year.
6. Community Services (Unit 19) also helped to weed the streets of the town this year ahead of an 'Unannounced Judging Day' by Britain in Bloom judges in February and did an excellent job.
7. There are plans to use the Purbeck Day Centre, who have been sponsored by B&Q and WDDT to set up a gardening service. A major project will be the restoration of Priory Meadow for which grant funding has been sought and we are hopeful that this overgrown area will soon be back to its former glory.
8. A letter was posted out to many town centre households asking for their co-operation in keeping their frontages weeded and making sure their front gardens are tidy and the Mayor called for a special effort to involve everybody in keeping their own garden areas looking good and weed free.

9. Wareham in Bloom held a fundraising Coffee Morning and sale on 26th January and raised £350. Another Coffee Morning and Plant and Bric a Brac Sale has been organised for Saturday 10th May.
10. A local nurseryman, Mr Jorge Annaheim, was once again pleased to receive the contract for providing Wareham in Bloom flower displays in the form of hanging baskets and planter stands, following success at Gold level in 2007. An even better display is planned for the town centre in summer 2008 and for the major entrances to the town.
11. The Committee's deep appreciation is expressed to all the sponsors of Wareham in Bloom. Without their contribution, however large or small it may be, the town could not achieve what it does every summer in providing stunning flower displays to impress our visitors and residents alike.

Wareham Museum Committee

1. The Museum Committee met on four occasions during the year 2007/2008.
2. A major achievement was the organisation of a Family History Day on 12th January 2008. Total visitors: a very pleasing 233 people who gained a very good insight into how to start investigating their own family history.
3. Grants were obtained via David Tucker from the Dorset County Council Small Museums Grant Fund for a computer and extra lighting and the new computer has now been installed - a real bonus as it replaced a very old machine. Donations for 2007 were £967 and sales totalled £908.
4. The T E Lawrence project donated funding for the framing of photographs and a digital photo frame
5. A Health and Safety lecture held on 27th February 2008 for volunteers and Council staff members was well attended and very beneficial.
6. New Jurassic Coast panels have been fitted in the Museum.
7. A re-print of 3,000 Museum brochures was organised during the year.
8. An excellent display was organised in Neville Jones solicitors window in North Street.
9. To thank all our volunteers, without whom the Town Museum could not function, a 'Thank You Lunch' was organised on 5th November 2007 in the Corn Exchange.

10. Museum website – there were 3,011 'hits' during the year and the site is continually monitored and updated to include new events and changes to displays and to include more links with outside museum related organisations. A new link to Wareham Town Council site was created and may well have boosted visits.
11. Much work was achieved over the winter closed period on enhancing the exhibits and the appearance has improved ready for our visitors as Easter approaches.
12. Total visitors for the year were recorded as 5,890 (5031 adults and 859 children).

Human Resources Panel

1. A new staff appraisal scheme called PADS (Personal Achievement and Development Scheme) was introduced this year for the first time.
2. Out of this appraisal process, a much improved staff training plan has evolved with staff expected to attend different courses to enhance their experience and to aid their personal development. The caretaker/groundsman has attended one pesticides application course and other staff have had Health and Safety and Fire training and attended various training days and seminars. Other relevant courses are planned for the future.
3. An internal audit plan was agreed in October 2007 and working systems have been overhauled. Various measures have been taken to tighten up administrative procedures with regard to agendas, minutes and pre-agenda meetings.
4. A change in the working hours for Admin staff was introduced in December, on a six month trial basis, to try and maximise the staff hours that are worked, and fully support the Town Clerk's office, which is a full time position. Shift working hours are being trialled and the results are awaited in June.
5. Following the internal auditor's report in March, and no comments to report, the Town Clerk and Finance Assistant were congratulated on their achievement.
6. In addition, the Panel reviewed staff salaries during the year, considered an urgent matter concerning a former staff member and followed ACAS advice on that matter, arranged for the caretaker and assistant caretaker's clothing to be in a smart uniform style, considered a draft Staff Training Plan from the Town Clerk which has now been implemented, and received an update on the new local government pension scheme, effective from 1st April 2008.

Wareham Community Partnership.

1. Wareham Community Partnership, in which the Town Council took a lead role during the year with the Town Clerk as secretary, held a very successful Community Plan Update Open Day in September. Many members of the public were better informed as to how the Community Plan translates into action on many different projects that the people of Wareham said they wanted back in 2005, following extensive consultation.
2. On 5th April 2008, a Housing Action Day was organised in the Corn Exchange.
3. Future plans include the exploration of providing a youth facility in the centre of town, a possible Youth Council for Wareham and projects for older people in the town.

Wareham Town Council

1. The Town Council Website – www.wareham-tc.gov.uk - has been considerably improved in the past year, following its creation in February 2007. There is a wealth of information on the site and Council minutes of meetings are now posted. It is hoped to include other committee minutes in the coming year. There is also a newsletter which is regularly updated. The site achieved 720 hits in May 2008, a record so far, many compliments have been received and we look forward to further success as the facility is continually improved.
2. There is a pdf link on the Website to the Wareham Town Guide. A new working party was set up in early 2008 to revise and update the original Guide of 2006 and the new edition will be published in July.
3. The Town Council is aiming to work towards increased co-operation with Purbeck District Council and Dorset County Council plus other parishes under the new 'Dorset Pathfinder' scheme. The Town Clerk, Mayor and Deputy Mayor, have attended meetings at the District Council's offices and we await the final outcome of this new government-sponsored initiative.
4. The Town Council supported the new Conches Twinning initiative to strengthen links between like organisations such as the Scouts and Guides, schools and sporting clubs which came about after the folding of the existing twinning association in July of last year. A party of interested townsfolk, including Mayor Sue Elmes, plan to visit Conches and meet the Deputy Mayor over the weekend of 8th to 11th May.
5. Two resignations of Councillors this year were received and they were wished well for the future. A bye election was called but only two candidates stood, and they were returned unopposed. Councillors Daniel Critchley and Tony

Williams are due to join the Council in the new Civic year. Details of all Wareham Town Councillors follow:

WAREHAM TOWN COUNCILLORS 2007-2011 - CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Address	Tel:
BOWYER-DAVIS Mrs PJW	10 East Street, Wareham BH20 4NP	551681
BUDD Mr D A	25 Bestwall Road, Wareham BH20 4HY	552017
BURNS Mr L P	20 Monmouth Road, Wareham BH20 4QP	556435
CLEATON Mrs D R	1 Avon Drive, Wareham BH20 4EL	553149
COTTON Miss M	11 Trent Drive, Northmoor, BH20 4DF	554529
CRITCHLEY Mr D	Flat 5, 27 Sandringham Road, Lower Parkstone, Poole, Dorset, BH14 8 TH	01202 749248
CRITCHLEY Mr K	4 Carey Approach, Wareham BH20 4BD	552651
ELMES Mrs S D	Back to Basics, Northport, BH20 4AT	552603
GREEN Mr K	20 Stockley Road, Wareham BH20 4EZ	556010
OSMOND Mr E L	3 Causeway Close, Wareham BH20 4BE	551000
RUSSELL Mr M G	106 Northmoor Way, Wareham BH20 4ET	553648
SELBY Mrs M A	10 Mistover Road, Wareham BH20 4BY	556527
TIGHE Mrs A	Pear Tree Cottage, 2D St. Martins Lane Wareham BH20 4HP	556384
TURNER Mrs C E	7 Bestwall Crescent, Wareham BH20 4JB	556761

WAINWRIGHT Mrs M	38A North Street, Wareham BH20 4AQ	555288
WILLIAMS Mr T	61 Sandford Road, Wareham, BH20 4DQ	550190

(Contact: R M Curtis, Town Clerk, Wareham Town Council, tel: 01929 553006 for any further details on this Annual Report.)