



Ware Town Council Annual Report 2016/17

A Message from the Mayor, Cllr Jonathan Kaye

It has been a huge privilege to have been Mayor of Ware for the past year and it is clear to me that what makes this town tick is the amount of effort put in by volunteers on various committees, charities and organisations. Some of the highlights over the past 12 months include the Ware Food Festival on the last bank holiday Monday in May, the Ware Carnival organised by the Ware Festival Committee in early July, the Ware – No Place for Hate rally and procession supported by all the political parties and members of the community shortly after the Referendum, Rock in the Priory in late July, Christmas Together for those living on their own on Christmas Day at the Riverside Hall, summer concerts in the Priory Grounds, the Mayor's Christmas Reception for volunteers, my afternoon tea and quiz, judging an Easter Egg competition at Fletcher's Lea, meeting Scouts, Cubs, Guides and Beavers, visiting the newly managed Ventura Zoo at Van Hague and re-signing the pledge of friendship with our twin town, Cormeilles which is to the north of Paris. For me, the best evening of the year in Ware has to be Dickensian Evening put on by the Ware Town Partnership in early December. It has grown considerably over the years, attracts people from outside the town and includes a variety of stands and events including the excellent Christmas Tree Festival at Leaside Church. I know the volunteers with Dickensian evening need more help with this event. We are lucky to have talented singers and musicians in the area so we benefit from tremendous performances by Ware Brass, the Ware Operatic Society and Hertford Symphony Orchestra who performed from November through to January at the Drill Hall. A Mayor's Community Garden Party lunch will take place in the Priory this Saturday.



My charity has been Pinewood School's youth club, SG12. This is a youth club that is open to the pupils of that school for 50 weeks a year and I have enjoyed several visits to the school including their fete and a recent meeting where we discussed possible developments affecting their unique mini-train and railway. It is always a pleasure to see the staff and students at Pinewood.

I have represented the town further afield in Hertford, Stevenage, Sawbridgeworth and Broxbourne including attending St Edmunds College's amazing production of Les Miserables at the Spotlight. Their own play, performed at the school, about a former student from Germany who was captured and killed by Nazis in Holland was very moving indeed.

Two years ago there was a high profile campaign in Ware to 'save the Southern Maltings'. Well done to the organisers who reached a deal with East Herts Council to keep the building for the arts. Ware Town Council contributed a grant to assist the group.

Ware Town Council is due to have a new website soon. Thanks to Councillor David Oldridge for overseeing this project.

One councillor elected two years ago resigned due to work commitments in St Albans – he represented UKIP. We have since co-opted Catherine Reed who has lived in the town for many years. Her appointment is due to be approved at the next council meeting.

We welcome new staff to the Priory including Sean Higgins, our new Finance and Administration Manager and Katya Mead, Administration Assistant.

A new event starts this weekend called Ware's the Music which will showcase live music in the town's pubs. Music and Motors continues to be an annual event and congratulations to all of the people involved with Ware in Bloom. They continue to win regional awards with their considerable skills to help make our town look so attractive.

Councillor Jonathan Kaye, Mayor of Ware

Support to Local Organisations in 206/17

Friends of Sacred Heart	£250	Towards a circus event
Pins & Feathers	£200	Towards a theatre production
East Herts Council DAG	£250	Towards Summer activities in Ware
East Herts CAB	£500	Towards running costs in Ware
Ware & District Photographic Society	£315	Towards cost of Annual Exhibition
Age Concern Ware	£285	Towards new cooker & Christmas lunch
Millbrook Club	£200	Towards a celebratory dinner
Wodson Park Netball Club	£200	Towards training for coaches
Wodson Park Trust	£5,000	Towards refurbishment of changing rooms
Total awarded 2016/17	£7,200.00	

[The Town Council supports the following organisations with annual grants:-](#)

Ware Museum General Grant £5,000
Ware Museum Tourist Information Point £2,100
Ware Town Partnership Dickensian Evening £1,600
Ware Town Partnership Ware in Bloom £1,300

Report on the Accounts for 2016/17 and the Budget for 2017/18

The financial environment has continued to be difficult and the Council has worked hard to manage its finances responsibly and to limit any increase in precept below inflation. This year's increase is just 1.0% (based on a Band D property). Unfortunately, due to continued challenging market conditions in the hospitality sector, together with financial difficulties experienced by two office tenants in the Priory building, the overall result was a small excess of expenditure over income. This amount of c.£5,000 will be covered from the Council's reserves which currently stand at c.£400,000.

The Council derives a significant part of its income from functions in the Priory and Fletcher's Lea. I mentioned last year that despite a recovery in the economy, the hospitality industry had continued to experience difficulties. Overall our income from functions was down against budget. The wedding market has continued to be challenging. However, as there is typically a long lead-time for wedding bookings, we are not expecting to see the benefits of our increased marketing activities in this area and the change of caterer (both implemented early in the previous financial year) until this year.

The Town Council continues to budget for all the services that residents expect, such as the Lido, Ware Festival, the Food Festival, Rock in the Priory and the Community Cinema. In addition, the Council as Trustee of the Priory Charity is responsible for the upkeep and the maintenance of the Priory building and grounds; following the most recent quinquennial inspection of the building a programme of works has been established to ensure that it is maintained in the best possible condition. Both of the town's allotment sites continue to thrive I would like to thank the Allotments and Leisure Gardens Society for its hard work.

The Town Council will continue to provide financial support to local groups such as Ware in Bloom, Dickensian Evening and Ware Museum and to contribute towards the running costs of the CCTV system. The Council also provides *ad hoc* grants to local organisations – see above.

I would like to thank the Friends of Ware Lido for their continued assistance with marketing and also with making improvements to the Lido. The Town Council's commitment to this unique and well-loved facility in the town is well-known and was rewarded through the very generous grant from GSK as part of their 300th birthday celebrations. The grant enabled us to carry out extensive improvements to the Lido building, changing rooms and pool surround, helping to ensure that the Lido will be enjoyed by the people of Ware for many years to come. Last year the running costs for the Lido were c.£27,000, much less than the previous year due, in part, to good weather and also to improvements made to the building.

The New Home Bonus is a grant paid by Central Government to the District Council based on the number of new homes built. The District Council has decided to pass on part of this grant to Town and Parish councils to spend how they see fit. This Council has so far received a total of £330,000 in this regard and it has been allocated to such projects as Tudor Square, the Neighbourhood Plan, a contribution towards the Lido Project, and grants to Southern Maltings Community Group, The Ware Drill Hall Association and Wodson Park. The Council continues to look for other local projects that this grant funding could be allocated to.

Ware Town Council Income and Expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2017

	Forecast Income and Expenditure			Budget Income and Expenditure			Budget Income and Expenditure		
	2016/17	2016/17	2016/17	2016/17	2016/17	2016/17	2017/18	2017/18	2016/17
	Income	Expend	Balance	Income	Expend	Balance	Income	Expend	Balance
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
As Trustee of the Priory Building									
Priory Building	188855	257929	-69074	221,893	254,175	-32,282	209447	255627	-46180
Priory Grounds, incl Public Conveniences	7835	103934	-96099	900	98,236	-97,336	900	103213	-102313
Priory Lido	500353	527509	-27156	45,450	88,465	-43,015	74280	104446	-30166
Fletcher's Lea	43473	105,685	-62212	72,796	106,695	-33,899	68500	109,145	-40645
Audit Fee		18702	-18702		10,000	-10,000		10000	-10000
Miscellaneous income and costs		3250	-3250		2,330	-2,330		767	-767
Loan payment Fletcher's Lea		93,280	-93,280		93,280	-93,280		93,280	-93,280
Total for Priory Charity	740,516	1,110,289	-369,773	341,039	653,181	-312,142	353,127	676,478	-323,351

	Forecast Income and Expenditure			Budget Income and Expenditure			Budget Income and Expenditure		
	2016/17	2016/17	2016/17	2016/17	2016/17	2016/17	2017/18	2017/18	2016/17
	Income	Expend	Balance	Income	Expend	Balance	Income	Expend	Balance
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Ware Town Council Services									
Allotments	5102	7180	-2078	5,200	8,008	-2,808	5200	8092	-2892
Closed Churchyard, War Memorial & Clock		2607	-2607		3,564	-3,564		4664	-4664
Cemetery	79700	58150	21550	71,500	73,702	-2,202	75000	91146	-16146
Tourism, Leisure & Amenities	8875	43267	-34392	5,000	46,600	-41,600	5100	40060	-34960
Town Twinning		2449	-2449		2,000	-2,000		2000	-2000
Town Centre CCTV		10600	-10600		10,600	-10,600		10600	-10600
Ware Festival	11422	18560	-7138	7,800	17,533	-9,733	6100	14728	-8628
Administration	118917	295584	-176667	118,998	313,176	-194,178	90521	271463	-180942
Subsidy to Priory Charity as above	740,516	1,110,289	-369773	341,039	653,181	-312,142	353,127	676,478	-323351
Precept Income	568115		568115	568,115		568,115	584183		584183
Use of Reserves	2500		2500	2,500		2,500			
Brought forward from 2015/16	8212		8212	8,212		8,212			
Total for Ware Town Council	1,543,359	1,548,686	-5,327	1,128,364	1,128,364	0	1,119,231	1,119,231	0

Council Services

Ware Town Council provides:

- Ware Cemetery
- Allotments at Widbury Hill and King George Road
- Maintenance of the war memorial, church clock and the churchyard at St Mary the Virgin
- Ware Festival, Rock in the Priory, free band concerts, town tours, town talks, food festival
- Support and encouragement of Town Twinning with Wülfrath, Germany and Cormeilles-en-Parisis, France
- Ware Youth Town Council
- Grants to local organisations
- The Town Council is the first tier of local government and represents the views and opinions of Ware residents.

As Trustee of the Priory Charity the Town Council provides:-

- Ware Priory and Fletcher's Lea
- Priory Grounds and public toilets
- Children's play area and skate park
- Ware Priory Lido (heated outdoor pool)

How to Contact Your Councillors

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