



Ware Town Council

Ware Priory, High Street, Ware, SG12 9AL

www.waretowncouncil.gov.uk

01920 460316

COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday 18th September 2023

in the Council Chamber, Ware Priory, Ware, starting at 7.30pm

MINUTES

CLlr Hill (Chair) Bryant, Mowbray, Scully, Shaw.

Officer present: Terry Philpott Town Clerk,

Via zoom Sarah Fenton, Donna Mansfield, Ros Montgomery.

Members of the public: nil

CE294: To receive and accept Apologies for Absence

- Cllr K Taylor-Moran

CE295: To receive any Declarations of Interest and review any requests for Dispensation submitted to the Clerk.

- None declared.

CE296: Minutes from the previous meeting: to receive and sign the minutes of the last Community and Environment meeting held on 3rd July 2023

Resolved: The minutes are an accurate record

CE297: Correspondence and Clerks report (TP 5mins)

- Twinning update, still awaiting feedback from Cormeilles re Spring 2024 visit.

CE298: Bier Proposal (5 mins)

To review the proposal from John Wing and agree the next steps.

This item was deferred from the previous meeting awaiting confirmation of

- Budget / funding availability
- Specific Location

Resolved: To support a grant proposal up to £2700 for the permanent siting of the Bier, not on WTC land.

CE299: Allotments and Cemetery Updates (5 mins)

Allotment Waitlist Report

There is currently a total of **44** people on the waiting list covering both sites.

Site	# on Waitlist	# of Vacant Plots
Crosspath Field (King George Road)	7	4
Warehouse Field (Widbury Hill)	37	7

There are 3 people on the Warehouse Field waiting list who already have a plot but would like an additional one and 4 people who are not residents of Ware. Priority is given to all others on the list before non-residents or those wanting additional plots.

There is also 5 people on the Warehouse Field waiting list who have shared, over the last 9 months, they do not feel in a position to take on an allotment plot at this time. I will periodically contact them to see if their situation has changed and what their wishes are in regard to remaining on the waiting list. Their remaining on the waiting list does not impact those further down the list.

Allotment Inspections

Allotment re-inspections, across both sites, is in the process of being completed. The 25 of those 60 have been marked as 'poor' (16 at Warehouse Field and 9 at Crosspath) have been re-inspected and in cases where no work has been undertaken or conversations had with the Allotments Officer, a Notice of Intent to Terminate has been issued. This Notice gives the plot holder 30 days to take action on their plot.

Allotment Competition Awards

The main allotment competition was completed in July, with Mayor. Thomas Day and Cllr. Graeme Hill judging the shortlisted plots. Unfortunately, this year we were unable to judge the 'Best Newcomer'

category due to the very limited number of appropriate plots. The Allotment Competition Awards will take place from 6:30pm on Monday 18 September, with the plot holders placed 1st and 2nd place for 'Best Kept Plot' for each site attending. Committee members of the Ware Allotment & Gardens Society (WAGS) will be attending the Awards.

Sunflower Competition

This year we opened the Sunflower Competition was opened out to all residents of Ware, with both adult and children categories for tallest flower and largest flower head. We have had 3 entries into the adult category and 2 in the children's.

Cemetery Topple Testing

Headstone topple testing was completed at Ware Cemetery in July. This process is also known as Memorial Stability Testing. Topple testing is required by Law to ensure all cemeteries are deemed safe. The work involves a headstone's stability being tested by hand to ensure it is not at risk of falling over. This previously became a statutory requirement following the death of a child visiting a London cemetery.

We contracted The CDS Group to complete the testing and they did so "in line with the practical and pragmatic methods as laid out in the guidance notes of the Ministry of Justice and the recently published BSI Standards Publication (ref 8415:2018 –Memorials within burial grounds and memorial sites – Specification)".

A total of **2585** memorials were tested. Of these **348** were deemed unstable due to movement occurring and of these, **31** were deemed 'High Risk'. The remaining 317 were deemed 'Medium Risk'. The company does not mark any as 'Low Risk'.

Where possible we have written to all Registered Owners of the 'High Risk' memorials to advise them immediate action is required to make their memorial safe. We have asked they make contact with a qualified Stonemason, who is either registered with NAMM (National Association of Memorial Masons) or BRAMM (British Register of Memorial Masons), to undertake the required repair work. We will be reinspecting these memorials in 3 months' time and if no arrangement has been made to repair and make safe, Ware Town Council will need to decide whether to appropriately lay the memorial flat on the grave space.

I am in the process of putting together a mail merge to send letters to all Registered Owner's of those memorials deemed 'Medium Risk'. This involves finding the original Deed for each grave space and checking the Registered Owner's information (whether they are deceased or address is still valid), as well as updating the Burial Records.

Some of the difficulties we face, is that the Registered Owner may be deceased and we do not hold any information on living relatives or a Registered Owner has changed address, so we have no way of contacting the family. Some families may also not be in agreement that the memorial is unstable and refuse to repair. In those situations, dependent whether the memorial has been deemed 'high risk' or 'medium risk', Ware Town Council will decide whether it is appropriate to lay the memorial flat.

The report was noted.

CE300: Events update. Report attached (RM 10mins)

To receive a report from the events manager.

Summer Concerts

The programme of summer concerts ended on 10th September with a concert by Ware Brass. The concerts have once again been very popular and well attended.

School holiday activities

An extended programme of free summer holiday activities took place over the 6-week school holidays. These activities included craft, water wars, zorb football, dodgeball, beat the goalie, art, climbing wall, giant hungry hippos, archery and pedal cars. The activities were across the age range, up to 17 years. The scheme was really well received by the local community, not just by those who have directly benefited but with favourable comments from other members of the community. An evaluation is currently taking place. Work will begin on the Summer 2024 programme in November.

October half term 2023

23/10/23	Halloween crafting – open to all ages
25/10/23	Lego workshop – younger children
26/10/23	Gaming – older children

February half term

We are planning to host films for younger and older children during the February half term.

Ware Festival

Ware Festival 2024 was successful and much appreciated by the local community. The AGM takes place at The Priory on 26th September 7.30pm. The AGM is followed by an Open Meeting to discuss Ware Festival 2024. Everyone is welcome.

Cinema

Our afternoon cinema programme resumed on 6th September with a sold-out performance of 'Mrs Harris Goes to Paris'. The remaining films in the current programme are:

03/10/23	I Wanna Dance with Somebody
02/11/23	Oppenheimer
12/12/23	The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry

Carol Concert

The Annual Carol Concert will take place on Sunday 17th December, timings to be agreed. Ware Brass will play. The Concert will take place outside if the weather allows, otherwise in Fletcher's Lea.

2024 Events

Cinema – January to May

The January-May programme will be available towards the end of the year.

Easter Funday

The Easter activities will take place at the Priory on Saturday March 30th, 2024.

Food Festival 2024

The date proposed is Sunday 19th May clashed with the Sunday market, a new date will be proposed.

Summer Concerts

A programme of summer entertainment May-September will be put together during autumn/winter 2023.

D-Day 80th Anniversary – 6th June 2024

To discuss if Ware Town Council would like to mark the day. It was agreed to mark the event, a proposal to be outlined for the next C&E meeting. Budget agreed c£2K to £3K.

Ware Festival 2024

Ware Festival will begin with Carnival Day on Saturday July 6th. Planning will commence in November 2023.

School Holiday activities

Work will begin on the Summer 2024 programme in November.

Mayoral Events

Humanist Service: 8th October 3.30pm service in Fletcher's Lea – Reception Conservatory from 4.30pm

Mayor's Reception for volunteers: 7th December, Fletcher's Lea – 7pm-8.30pm

Quiz Night: 10th November, Fletcher's Lea

Mayor's Gala: 23rd March 2024, Fletcher's Lea

The report was noted.

CE301: Ware Film Festival (VS 10 mins)

To receive an update on the Film Festival 2023.

Ware's the Film Festival - 2023			
Films			
Films confirmed (subject to licen	Potential Venue	Day	Time
Banshees of Inisherin	Southern Maltings	Sunday 22nd October	7.30pm
Super Mario Bros	Fletcher's Lea	Tuesday 24th October	2pm
Dora and the Lost City of Gold	Allenbury's	Tuesday 24th October	6.30pm
Rudy	Fletcher's Lea	Tuesday 24th October	7.30pm
Looking for Eric	Tap Bar	Thursday 26th October	7.30pm
Good Luck to you, Leo Grande	Fletcher's Lea	Friday 27th October	7.30pm
Aftersun	Fletcher's Lea	Saturday 28th October	7.30pm
Mrs Harris Goes to Paris	Place House	Sunday 29th October	7.30pm

Training for hosts, dates to be circulated by VS on WhatsApp.

CE302: Town Centre projects 2023/24 (SF 10mins)

Tudor Square Sunday Market

Remaining market dates for the year are below. We have met with Southern Maltings and re-introduced a November market due to trader requests for Christmas products. The schedule for 2024 has been agreed along with a plan to most effectively run the market for the benefit of the town going forward. The market has been re-branded as 'Local Produce and Craft Market' to reflect the traders that have proved popular and what appeals to visitors. We have printed an extra three banners to be put up around the town to promote the town including a permanent banner position in Tudor Square.

- Sun 17th Sep
- Sun 15th Oct
- Sun 19th Nov

Shared Prosperity Funding

As noted in the last report since we submitted an outline to East Herts Council for this funding; including projects that fit in with East Herts' four investment priorities for the fund (self-contained toilets sited on the Priory grounds, refurbishment of the current toilet block for an alternative use,

more EV charging points and a potential wayfinding/signage survey in the town centre) there has been no update from EH but this will remain on our radar to progress for Ware.

Town Centre Spring Clean

A spring clean of jet-washing, pigeon mess clearing and chewing gum removal for the High Street and surrounding streets (including Baldock St and Amwell End) took place in late August with contractors that we engaged, good results were obtained. The war memorial was carefully steam cleaned with equipment to make sure the stonework was not damaged. Before and after photos.



Community Payback Autumn Clean

We applied recently to be a part of Hertfordshire Probationary Service's Community Payback 'Autum Clean' campaign. The scheme offers an opportunity for supervised offenders to help the community while learning new skills. We have requested a range of tasks to tidy up the town and improve the street scene including removing old notices and fly posting stickers from lampposts and painting street furniture. The team has kindly agreed to keep us on their permanent rota so that as and when work needs doing, we can request a team visits to carry it out.

Traders Association Proposal

The consultants have met with us to explore the feasibility of establishing a new trader's association in Ware. A meeting is planned for October/November with local businesses invited to give their views and feedback on the proposal. Funding is from East Herts Council.

Christmas 2023

There has been no further information provided by Ringway or HCC since the seminar in early July on the requirements that should be met when attaching festive lighting and banners to street lighting columns in Hertfordshire, in line with Section 178 of the highways act 1980.

We have agreed to lease a new version of the Ware Bear for this season. A quote for festoon lighting in West Street is being prepared. Currently, the licence we will submit is for:

- Lantern lights throughout town
- Ware Bear
- Amwell End 3 street column displays
- 3 x Cross Street displays in High St and Baldock St

-East Street Festoon Lighting

Street Signs and Wayfinding

We have met with several companies to investigate a wayfinding survey around the town. The cost of this will need to be budgeted for in the next year or external funding agreed. On 26th September we are meeting with local Councillors (including HCC Councillors for Ware) and Ringway to walk around the town and look at existing road signs to explore options for improvements.

The report was noted.

CE303 : Communications update 2023/24 (SF 10mins)

Ware Town Council Website

Website data for August is not currently available. The analytics issue is being investigated. But as there wasn't a Community & Environment meeting in August, I can instead report the July data:

For July our website had 21,442 views from 9,201 visitors.

Up 29% views from the previous month (June). **Up 16%** visitors from the June.

Top pages visited in July (other than homepage):

1. Ware Festival
2. Rock in the Priory
3. Lido
4. What's On in Ware
5. Real Ale Festival
6. Events
7. Ware Town Council July Newsletter
8. Ware Festival news article
9. Abba Stars Summer Concert
10. Priory Park

Social Media

Across our social media pages (July) on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter for Ware Town Centre, Ware Town Council, Ware Priory & Ware Lido in the month:

210 posts **Up 23%**

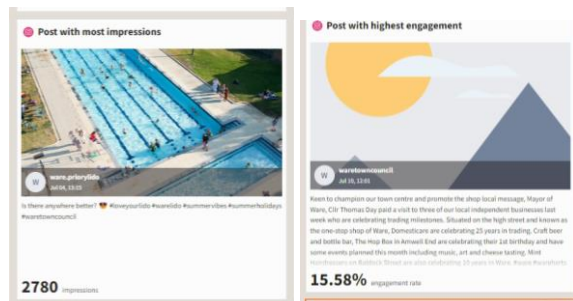
150,547 impressions (the number of times the posts appeared on someone's screens) **Up 1%**

132,031 users (the number of people who saw our posts) **Up 1%**

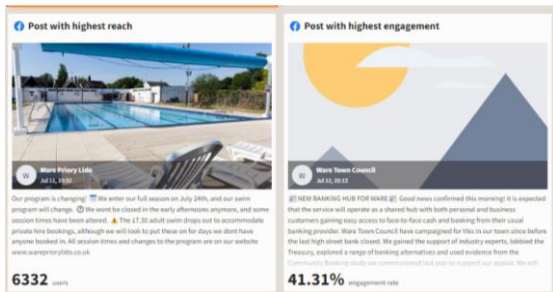
5.13% engagement rate across networks (average engagement rate) **up from 4.39%**

21,970 Fans/Followers across networks **Up 2%**

389 New Fans/Followers this month **Down 55% month on month but we are still adding a good number of new followers and fans each month**



Instagram Highlights



Facebook Highlights

Digital Noticeboards

CE304: Publication Scheme (SF)

Resolved: To readopt the publication scheme.

CE305: WTC Getting to Carbon Neutral by 2030 (GH/TP 20mins)

To receive feedback on the following actions agreed at the last meeting.

- To investigate carbon offsetting schemes, the cost would be c£10K pa to (TJP/GH)
- To create an ESG policy / Completed (TJP)
- To review the Eco report and feedback from the presentation and agree the next steps, discuss (all)
- To agree the Community Engagement strategy, broadly agreed with the details to be refined. (all)

CE306: Youth Engagement (All/ 15 mins)

Resolved: Not to create a Youth Council at the present time.

Cllr Mowbray to investigate further youth engagement options and report back.

CE307: Recycling initiatives (BB/GH)

To note the report from the Grounds and Maintenance Manger related to recycling / trade waste.

The Priory currently have two 1100L recycling bins that are filled up and emptied every two weeks. We also have one paper bin that is emptied at the same time. We currently have 4 trade waste bins that are emptied weekly. The bin store new has 4 trade one paper and one recycling bin this is now full and we have no room for more bins. We are planning to build a new bin store over winter and this will be ready for April 24. The trade bins get emptied weekly and the recycling every two weeks so in

order to do more recycling we need more bins, so we don't fill them up and run out of bin space before they are collected. The new bin store will be able to store 5 1100L recycling bins. We will still need to have trade bins but will be able to change two more of the trade bins for recycling. Please see summary below for what bins will be in place.

- 1 paper bin
- 2 1100L Trade waste bins
- 7 1100L Recycling bins

The cost to empty a trade waste bin weekly is 25.30.

The cost to empty a recycling bin is 10.00 fortnightly.

As well as putting in place more recycling for the building and grounds this will also reduce costs for the council.

Ware Town Council								
Waste and Recycling bins								
	Now	Now	Now	Now	Future	Future	Future	Future
Type	Number	Collection	Cost / coll	Total Cost	Number	Collection	Cost / coll	Total Cost
Waste (weekly)	4	208	25.30	5262.40	2	104	25.30	2631.20
Recycling (fortnightly)	2	52	10.00	520.00	7	182	10.00	1820.00
Paper	1	26	10.00	260.00	1	26	10.00	260.00
Total	7	286	45.3	6042.4	10	312	45.3	4711.2

To discuss the reduction / recycling objectives detailed below prior to a formal proposal to the next C&E meeting.

- Biodegradable Takeaway packaging – the concept was supported, further info at the next meeting (BB).
- Disposable Vapes - the council acknowledges the issues, but a national scheme is required to be effective.
- Recycle bins for High St – further discussion with EHC. (SF)
- Terracycle recycling boxes

Proposal to trial a scheme where we work with local pharmacies to put Terracycle recycling boxes in for the re-cycling of Medicine blister strips. These are currently not recyclable, and all end up in landfill or incinerator due to the composite nature of the material. Teracycle offer a service where you pay for a box to be located and this is then collected when full. The boxes cost from £92 to £199 depending on size (can hold 1500 blister stirps for small – to 7500 for larger size)

WTC / the pharmacy would pay for the bins located in the pharmacy. They could highlight the service and, WTC could advertise it via our media channels.

One note of caution, Terracycle have a reputation of potential 'Green-Washing' as they work with some of the largest plastic users (Coke etc). However, when I looked at assessments for this type of recycling, they are the only company offering it and the general consensus it is better to do it than not.

Agreed for a full proposal to come to then next C&E meeting (GH)

CE308: Environmental Greenspace review (TP)

Resolved: To incorporate the proposals into the business plan.

CE309: Biodiversity initiatives (TP 5mins)

Agreed actions from previous meeting.

To provide a series of social media posts related to Biodiversity (GH) to receive an update on the posts and public feedback.

To consider activities for the 2024 events programme related to Biodiversity (RM)

CE310: Biodiversity Statement (TP)

The above document issued for review on 21st July 2023, following the seven week review the recommendation is to readopt with no changes.

Resolved: to readopt with no changes.

CE311: Environmental Policy (TP)

The above document issued for review on 21st July 2023, following the seven week review the recommendation is to readopt with no changes.

Resolved: to readopt with no changes.

CE312: Crime and Disorder Statement (TP)

The above document issued for review on 21st July 2023, following the seven week review the recommendation is to readopt with no changes.

Resolved: to readopt with no changes.

CE313: Review of ESG policy (TP)

To review the ESG policy and agree an action plan to support the implementation over the next four years of the business plan.

The proposed next action is for the Councillors to review each policy and consider any actions, circulate to Councillors and Officers for review prior to consideration by the C&E committee on 20th

November 2023. Items agreed by the C&E will be added to the four-year business plan and will subject to financial / resource scrutiny.

18th September 2023: Review by Councillors / Officers

16th October 2023: Drafts to be circulated for feedback from Councillors / Officers

13th November 2023: Final documents to be emailed to the Clerk for inclusion in the C&E agenda pack.

20th November 2023: C&E Committee approve draft proposals.

27th November 2023: Budget workshop including costed proposals.

8th January 2024: Business plan for 2024 – 2028 approved / 25 approved.

8th January 2024: Budget / Precept for 2024/25 approved.

Recommendation: To approve the work and the schedule with specific ESG areas allocated.

Environment

Biodiversity (C&E) (TD)

We will promote biodiversity in all areas controlled by WTC and those areas that we have influence. We will encourage wilded areas.

Carbon Footprint Reduction (F&P/C&E) (GH)

We will be carbon neutral by 2030, we will use carbon offsetting to cover any overage based on our targets and will include this in our financial budget.

Carbon Footprint Reduction in Our Communities (C&E) (TD/DS)

We will lead by example by providing information and guidance to our communities to facilitate reduced carbon output.

Pollution (C&E) (GH/BB)

We will encourage modes of transport that are less polluting. We will adhere to rules and guidelines to avoid polluting rivers and water courses.

Sustainable Transport (C&E) (GH/BB)

We will be an advocate and work with others to provide access to safe, affordable safe accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, reducing pollution at an affordable cost.

Society

Community Engagement in Decision Making (C&E) (TD)

We will engage with the community in decisions that impact on them, to support the building of sustainable cohesive communities with improved outcomes, supported by our community engagement policy. We will recognize excellence in our communities by the Freedom of Ware awards and the annual town council award scheme.

Youth Engagement (C&E) (RM)

We aim to build meaningful relationships with young people aged 10-21 years old (or up to 25 years if they have physical or learning difficulties). We will do this through youth clubs, multi-sport sessions and in partnership with voluntary, statutory and community groups.

Healthy Living (C&E) (GH)

We will encourage a healthy lifestyle to our residents and colleagues, through a programme of communications and subsidised events.

Governance

CE314: Agenda items for next meeting

Health and Wellbeing Day (GH)

To agree any items to be dealt with after the public, including the press have been excluded. (A resolution to be passed by Councillors)
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Commercial Confidentiality

CE315: Tourist Information point in the Museum (SF/TP 10mins)

Agreed to continue with the current set up with no further investment at the current time. More focus on literature from local community groups.

With no further business the meeting closed at 9.55pm

Signed

Dated