



Ware
Town Council

ANNUAL REPORT

2023 to 2024



Ware Town Council retains Gold Award status –
an accolade shared by only 51 out of 10,000
local councils in England



**See inside for how
Ware Town Council
works on your behalf
to maintain and
improve our town**

Foreword

FROM **TERRY PHILPOTT**,
CHIEF EXECUTIVE & TOWN CLERK



We have an even bigger programme planned for this year

Welcome to our latest Annual Report. Following positive feedback about the 2022/23 report, we have kept the same format. This last year saw the conclusion of our 2020 to 2024 Business Plan and the creation of the next four-year plan set by the new council following the elections in May 2023. My personal highlights from the year were the extended Lido opening season, which included Christmas Day swimming, and the success of our expanded events schedule that goes from strength to strength. We have an even bigger programme planned for this year.

I am disappointed we have not been able to refurbish the toilet block in the Ware Priory grounds due to concerns raised by Heritage England. A revised scheme will be ready for Spring 2025. We welcomed our new Climate and Biodiversity Manager to support us in achieving carbon zero by 2030, plus projects like the Library of Things and Refill initiative. We provided a new home for Foodbank and Men's Shed within our estate and supported over 40 local groups with grants totalling £53,450

The Mayor's charity for last year, Citizens Advice East Herts, benefitted from a sponsored cycle ride from Ware's French

twin town of Cormeilles-en-Parisis. I completed the 215-mile challenge with last year's Mayor, Cllr Thomas Day, Cllr Graeme Hill and Council Officer, Kerry Mavris.

The current year shows every sign of being as busy and I look forward to seeing the results of the Residents Survey consultation taking place in early 2025.

Terry Philpott
Chief Executive & Town Clerk,
Ware Town Council,
Town Clerk of the Year 2022

11 elected Town Councillors work with a team of 16 staff headed by the Town Clerk. Visit www.waretowncouncil.gov.uk/councillors for information on the Councillors who represent the Ware community and how you can get in touch.



HOW YOUR MONEY WAS SPENT IN 2023/24

£1,725,347

Total Income

£1,911,334

Total Expenditure

£449,187

Reserves
(money carried over)

£53,450

Grants Awarded to
Local Community
Groups

Open to see more about Ware Town Council

STATISTICS AND FACTS

28,000
swims at
Ware Priory Lido

6,083
Pounds raised for
Mayor's charity, Citizens
Advice East Herts

777
Function
bookings at
Ware Priory &
Fletcher's Lea

2,500
Bulbs planted in Ware Priory
grounds & cemetery

1,596,400
People who saw our social
media content

208
Allotments
over 2 sites

60
engagements carried
out by Mayor of Ware

2100
children enjoyed
free school holiday
activities

COUNCIL TAX BAND D SPLIT 2023/24

In 2023-24 Ware Town Council
cost a Band D council taxpayer
£156.63 per year

£3.01 per week

Up 11p
a week from
the previous
year

£1 For every £1 of your Council Tax,
Ware Town Council received 7p

HOW WARE PRIORY WORKS

£118,039
Annual profits
from Ware Priory in
2023/24 that helped
support its running
and upkeep

Ware Priory Trading operates commercial activities including weddings, conferences, functions and renting office space. All profits generated are allocated to support the running and maintenance of facilities at Ware Priory. Ware Town Council is the sole trustee of the Priory Charity and is responsible for its management. The Priory grounds include the Priory building, Fletcher's Lea, Skatepark, the new Priory Play Park, Ware Museum and Ware Priory Lido.

HIGHLIGHTS OF WHAT WE DELIVERED IN 2023/24

EVENTS



- 8 Afternoon Cinema screenings in Fletcher's Lea
- 'Ware's The Film Festival' week of free films at 6 venues across town
- 10 free Summer Picnic Concerts in Ware Priory gardens
- Candlelight Christmas carol concert
- Mayor's fundraising events for Citizens Advice East Herts raising £6,083
- Carnival Parade, Town Fair, Riverside Real Ale Festival & Easter Fun Day with Ware Festival Committee raising £5,000 for charity
- 10th Annual Food Festival with music & entertainment
- D-Day 80th anniversary event
- School holiday activities including silent disco, climbing wall, water wars, Shakespeare theatre, LEGO day, laser tag, Zorb football, gaming screens, archery, pedal cars, spooky crafts and more

TOWN CENTRE



- Tudor Square Sunday Market expanded with local produce & craft
- Meet your Councillors stall at every monthly market
- Community Payback Team town centre tidy
- Pavement jet washing and war memorial specialist clean
- Successful campaigns for Post Office and Community Banking Hub
- Support of Pubwatch and Ware Independent Traders Association
- Financial support to Ware Museum, Ware in Bloom, Southern Maltings & Dickensian Evening

PRIORY ESTATE



- Premises for Food Bank at Ware Priory
- Men's Shed provided with the Ware Cemetery Lodge for their workshop
- Citizens Advice East Herts weekly advice sessions hosted in Ware Priory
- Cemetery rewilding success with more wildlife & rare plants
- Improvements to Fletcher's Lea a/c & heating

COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT



- Electric vehicle charging stations at Ware Priory
- 130 metres of new hedges to aid biodiversity
- NEW Climate & Biodiversity Officer
- More recycling bins
- Mayor's sponsored Town Twinning charity bike ride
- Increased grants pot to local community & volunteer groups
- 2024 Freedom of Ware recipients honoured
- St Mary's Church restoration contribution

LEISURE FACILITIES



- Lido cold water swimming season introduced
- Skate Park improvements & landscaping
- Priory Play Park NEW benches and seating
- Industry award for Lido

COMMUNICATIONS



- Driving footfall & focus on local businesses & events with social media promotion
- 25,000 social media fans & followers
- 6,000 email subscribers
- Increase in views of council, town centre, Ware Lido and Priory socials and websites

LOCAL GRANTS AWARDED

£53,450
AWARDED

£20,900
AN EXTRA
(64%) FROM
PREVIOUS YEAR

40
GROUPS
BENEFITTED

WE AWARDED GRANTS TO GROUPS INCLUDING

| | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Local schools | East Herts Swift Group | Red Kite Support |
| Ware Football Club | Carers in Herts | Ware & District |
| Ware Boxing Club | CHIPS Playschemes | Photographic Group |
| Ware Scouts & Guides | Christmas Together | Ware Drill Hall |
| Men's Shed | Wodson Park Trust | Scotts Grotto |
| Rotary Club | Herts Phoenix Athletic Club | Neighbourhood Plan |
| Ware Beekeepers | | and more |

PROJECTED EXPENDITURE FOR 2024/25

£2,376,843

2024/25 KEY PRIORITIES

- Programme of free wellbeing events
- 2025 Residents Survey to households
- Library of Things lending facility
- Town Centre visitor promotion
- Town centre plastic-free initiatives
- New public toilet block
- New Lido changing rooms & facilities
- Cycling participation projects
- Tree planting schemes
- More activities for young people
- Updated Christmas lights & illuminations
- Supporting Southern Maltings

waretowncouncil.gov.uk/ware-festival

2024 FESTIVAL THEME



- ★ Saturday July 6th - Carnival Day, Parade from Broadmeads at 1.25pm, Town Fair in Ware Priory grounds from 2pm, Boat Parade from 12:45pm
- ★ Saturday July 13th - Riverside Real Ale Festival 12pm - 11pm in Fletcher's Lea (tickets required) Raft Race from 12:30pm, Pavement Artists Competition 2:00pm - 3:15pm, Putting Competition 1:30pm - 3:00pm
- ★ Saturday July 20th - 'Our World in Words' kids literary activities in the day & 'In Conversation with Local Authors' in the evening at Ware Priory
- ★ Saturday July 27th - 'Old Town Live Ware' Town Centre Music Event (tickets required)
- ★ Sunday July 28th - Lip Service Brass Band Picnic Concert at Ware Priory 3:00pm - 5:00pm



Find out more about Ware Town Council

Visit our website or scan the QR code with your phone camera to sign up to the monthly Ware Town Council newsletter

Stay up to date with council news, town centre updates and local events on our socials

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Ware

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