

Ware Town Centre Projects & Communications Report May 2023

Tudor Square Sunday Market

Our market in partnership with Southern Maltings launched in February and is being held on the third Sunday of each month (excluding August and January). Southern Maltings manage the stall holders, an excellent range of local produce, crafts, and gifts. The first three markets in February, March and April were well attended. April's included a circus workshop for children and the May market will see the first dog show in the town centre being staged! Future dates for this year are:

- Sun 21st May
- Sun 18th Jun
- Sun 16th Jul
- Sun 17th Sep
- Sun 15th Oct
- Sun 19th Nov

Ware Town Council Website & Social Media

Our website migrated to Google Analytics 4 in August 2022 meaning we are able to show data from that point. Traffic from August 2022 to March 2023 amounted to 65k page views and 27k users. Our monthly newsletter readership has increased and now features each month in the top ten most visited pages.

For the 12-month period of March 2022 to Feb 2023 on our social media channels; Ware Town Council and Ware Town Centre (posts promoting shop local & businesses):

	Fans/Followers	Post Impressions	Post Reach	New Fans	Lost Fans	Posts published
Ware Town Centre						
Facebook	1437	285267	268272	422	27	274
Instagram	1793	171362	160770	778		276
Ware Town Council						
Facebook	1592	189095	176738	508	30	171
Instagram	505	26654	23053	274		152
Twitter	3022	69667		54		181

Our Google Business profile for the same period of March 2022 to February 2023:

	Number of times customers found this listing by searching on Google Search or Maps	Number of times this listing has been viewed on Google Search or Maps
March 2022 to Feb 2023	Total Searches 986348	Total Views 2242428
For these business profiles:		
Ware Town Council		
Ware Skatepark.		
Fletchers Lea		
Ware Priory Lido		
Ware Priory		

Brand Guidelines

These are now available for internal and external use detailing logo usage, colour palette and typography for Ware Town Council.

Town Centre Wayfinding & Signage

We have met with a company to explore options for a wayfinding strategy in Ware. The first phase of the process would be a town centre visit to audit the existing wayfinding, town centre layout, themes, heritage, and the existing public realm. This is followed by analysis and a presentation suggesting quantities and guide prices. There is also the option for a second phase that provides a detailed signage family, designs and mapping and the final phase is the production and installation of the signage. Each phase has a separate spec and cost. The views of Councillors on the validity of such a scheme are invited.

Shared Prosperity Funding

We have submitted an outline to East Herts Council for this funding including projects that fit in with East Herts' four investment priorities for the fund. We included self-contained toilets sited on the Priory grounds, refurbishment of the current toilet block for an alternative use, more EV charging points and for a potential wayfinding/signage survey in the town centre.

Town Centre Spring Clean

This will be scheduled for the next month. The spring clean will include jet-washing and chewing gum removal for the High Street and surrounding streets. We will combine this work with a cleaning of the war memorial by the same company to benefit from a volume discount.

Freedom of Ware holder, Jon Wing has kindly compiled a 'snagging list' of issues around the town that need addressing but aren't all necessarily within the scope of the town council, but nevertheless are important; graffiti & old covid posters, lampposts in need of painting etc. These issues have, in many cases been adversely commented on in the past when Ware in Bloom were being judged by Anglia and Britain in Bloom. We are looking at how we can facilitate these tasks in-house and what we can do to mobilise other authorities to address them and improve the attractiveness of the town centre for residents, shoppers and visitors.

Traders Association Proposal

We met with East Herts Officers and the Herts Growth Board Scheme who are looking at putting us forward for support for a new trader's association in Ware. We will update when further information is made available and assess if there is a real benefit for this in Ware.

Community Banking Hub

We submitted a request to LINK* in late December requesting a review and a banking hub and highlighting the difficulties Ware is experiencing with regards to accessing banking facilities. The review was completed in March, and this was the response we unfortunately received:

"LINK have undertaken a thorough review of the community including analysis of population data, vulnerability measures, current free access to cash, and the level of provision of banking facilities within the immediate area. Furthermore, we have visited the community in order to gain a more detailed understanding of the local circumstances. Our findings have been measured against set criteria given to us

by Cash Action Group to ensure that all requests are treated equally and fairly. This has resulted in the current level of access to cash provision being assessed as being suitable for the community and therefore a new solution is not considered to be necessary in this location. I have included a link to our Cash Locator, which helps consumers find their nearest access to cash provision (<https://www.link.co.uk/consumers/locator/>).”

Christmas 2023

The Ware Bear has reached his ‘end of life’ as expected with large outdoor illuminated set-pieces. This is due to the degradation in the covering material. His end was hastened by the vandalism suffered over the past two festive seasons. It would be helpful for Councillors to consider their thoughts for 2023 options and feedback please.