



Marlborough Town Council Annual Report 2017-18



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Town Mayor's Report

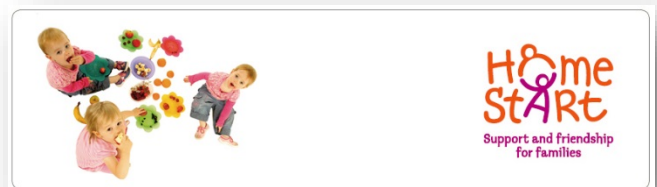
Councillor Mervyn Hall

The last year has been an incredibly busy one for our Mayor, Councillor Mervyn Hall, who has ushered in a new, enthusiastic Council which has already seen through a great deal including the taking on and refurbishment of the public toilets and the Community & Youth Centre. He has attended more than 110 civic events and has represented Marlborough further afield too. All of this includes attending sporting occasions, the Puppet Festival, Mop Fairs, South West in Bloom, the Christmas Lights Switch-on event, concerts, civic services across the county and much more. He has also worked hard for his chosen charities, Julia's House and Home Start Kennet alongside supporting various other local community and voluntary organisations. Furthermore he has built on our close links with the 4th Military Intelligence Battalion. Thanks go to his supportive Mayoress and wife, Cath.

In addition to his civic role, the Mayor is the Chairman of the Town Council with responsibility for chairing Full Town Council meetings as well as attending all other scheduled committees and many associated working party sessions too. He has represented the Council at an official level where he has put forward clear, rational arguments on Marlborough's behalf often to our Principal Authority, Wiltshire Council.

Cllr Hall is the Chairman of the Steering Group producing the Marlborough Area Neighbourhood Plan and heads up its monthly meetings and has hosted a number of consultative events and public meetings throughout the year.

The following pages offer a tour of some of the events, projects and issues dealt with during 2017/18. This and reports from the Town Council's committees, gives a taste of the increasing amount of work covered by this small local authority.



Action Plan 2017-2021

One of the first tasks for Councillors was to draw together an Action Plan for their new term of office. This summarises the projects and proposals that Marlborough Town Council, sometimes in partnership with others, will develop and/or deliver during its 4 year term and will also inform the budget setting process. It will be formally reviewed every 6 months and progress on projects will be reported to Full Council. It can be viewed on the Town Council website.



Marlborough World of Puppets

The weekend of 8/9 July was a special one when memories of Pelham Puppets were revisited to celebrate the founding of the company in Marlborough by Bob Pelham in 1947 after which it grew to be the largest employer in the town and many local families still have connections, puppets and fond memories of the company.

The festival, organised by a committee of volunteers supported by the Town Council, began with a Puppet Parade in the High Street headed up by the Phoenix Brass, a giant Punch & Judy, an impressive dragon created by students from St John's, a giant Merlin and lots of other puppets. The festival itself was spread in venues throughout the High Street with exhibitions of Pelham's early years at St Peter's Church and The Merchant's House. There was a free exhibition of various puppets together with shows throughout the weekend at the Town Hall and Priory Gardens with a special Civic Service at St Mary's Church.

The weekend was sealed by a finale performed by the Marlborough Academy of Dance and Drama, choreographed by Cheryl Huston and danced by her talented young performers. Marlborough Town Council is now working towards erecting a blue plaque to commemorate Bob Pelham, founder of Pelham Puppets.



Christmas Lights Switch-on

This year's Christmas Lights Switch-on took place on a clear, cold and crisp moonlit winter's night - a perfect start to the festive season. During the afternoon, children received gifts from Father Christmas in his Grotto and everyone was able to amble through the market and onto fairground rides further up the High Street. Our compere, Mark Jones, did an excellent job keeping the crowd entertained and introducing some fabulous acts – St John's Academy Band, Marlborough Academy of Dance & Drama, Eleanor Williams, a classical crossover singer, Marlborough Community Choir and Phoenix Brass.



Father Christmas and his reindeer chauffeured the Mayor to meet BBC Wiltshire's Breakfast Show host Ben Prater and two of his children who helped with the countdown to the Switch-on at 6.30pm.

Our thanks go to all those involved – the Christmas Lights Committee, the Rotary Club, Lions Club, Showmen's Guild, the Community Policing Team, 4th Military Intelligence Battalion, St John's Ambulance, Reflex Ltd, Wheelers of Westbury, 5 Star Security, volunteer stewards and our own staff who worked hard to make the event such a success. A special acknowledgement goes to our Lead Sponsor, Now! Vauxhall Marlborough, as well as to our other supporters - the Forestry Commission, T H White, Marlborough Building Supplies, Awdry Bailey & Douglas, David Owen & Co, Pino's Ristorante, Valentiner Designs and Daniel Claridge.



Remembrance Parade and Armistice Day

It was a proud weekend with Armistice Day falling on Saturday, 11 November and our Remembrance Parade on Sunday 12 November. At 11am on the Saturday, everything came to a halt in the High Street as HMS Marlborough's bell was rung and a siren marked the start of a 2 minutes silence with the last post sounded by accomplished local trumpet player, Basil King. The Mayor and Councillors stood with the then High Sherriff, Lady Penelope Marland, on the steps of the Town Hall alongside the Head Boy and Head Girl from St John's Academy. This was followed by a wreath laying ceremony at the 7th Wiltshire Regiment War Memorial at London Road.



At the Sunday Remembrance Parade, hundreds lined the High Street to watch as the parade marched to the New Road War Memorial led by the Phoenix Brass Band and the 4th Military Intelligence Battalion. Our Town Mayor and Councillors, the Commanding Officer of 4MI Bn, Claire Perry, MP, the Royal British Legion, the Emergency Services, the Cadet Forces, Scouts, Brownies and Guides all came to pay their respects to those who had lost their lives in war. Many laid wreaths at the foot of the Memorial before attending a moving Remembrance Service at St Mary's Church.

The commemorations will be particularly special this year as 2018 marks the centenary of the end of World War 1. The Town Council will be working with the Royal British Legion, the 4th Military Intelligence Battalion and others to make sure that this is properly commemorated.

4th Military Intelligence Battalion (4MI)

Another year when the links between Marlborough and 4MI have been strengthened further. This commitment was endorsed in February when a Community Covenant, first signed during the visit of HRH The Duke of Kent, was reviewed and re-signed by the Mayor and Lt Col Simon Puxley, Commanding Officer of the Battalion.

Soldiers have helped out at a number of community events throughout the year as well as joining our teams for cricket, golf and football matches. On 23rd February, well over 100 local people came along to meet soldiers from 4MI at a Civic Dinner held in their honour. They enjoyed excellent performances from the Band of the Adjutant General's Corps as well as the Marlborough Community Choir conducted by Vanessa Lafaye who sadly passed away on 28 February making this her last performance with the choir she founded. She impressed and charmed everyone with her witty introductions to each piece and mastery of her craft.



The Battalion also raises funds for charity. On 18 April, a hot day and in Marlborough's Town Hall, soldiers completed 12 High Intensity Fitness Circuits over the course of just 6 hours and all to support the Army Benevolent Fund and our Mayor's chosen charities.

Bound for History

Since the local government reorganisation in 1974, most of the Town Council's meeting minutes have been sitting in storage in Swindon. Last year, Councillors took the decision that these should be accessible to everyone and kept in conditions suitable for historic documents. The loose leaf minutes have now been bound and will be available at the Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre in Chippenham for all to see. They'll join the Marlborough Borough Council Minute Books, going back more than 100 years, which are really useful for looking back at land and ownership issues and other details about the town's history. The History Centre is well worth a visit and staff there are very helpful and knowledgeable too - you'll find yourself immersed in slices of local history where a few minutes can easily turn into a visit of a couple of hours!



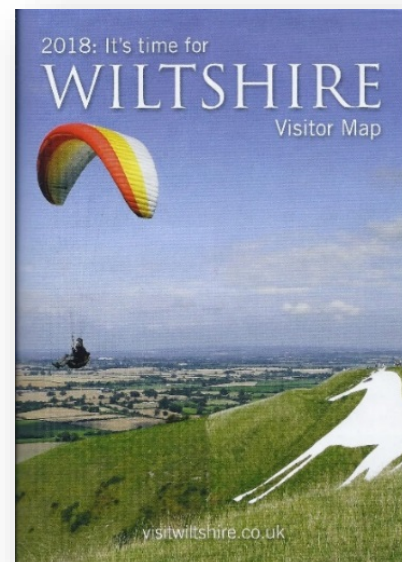
CCTV

In this last year, the Town Council has added to its cameras in and around the High Street and there is now camera surveillance at the Marlborough Community & Youth Centre at St Margaret's Mead and will soon be installed at the George Lane Public Toilets too.



Tourism

Marlborough's tourism offer is likely to become a key part in the town's vibrant economy. The Town Council has established a Working Party made up of a number of representatives of organisations in the town to foster a more coordinated approach. We continue to work with and promote the town through VisitWiltshire, particularly towards the exciting Great West Way project which is looking to create a premier long distance touring route between London, Bath and Bristol. Marlborough sits on that route. There is so much to welcome the visitor to Marlborough – a good choice of restaurants, pubs, independent shops, events throughout the year as well as its proximity to other local attractions. It's important that we look to maximising this offer and need to look closely at obstacles around parking, etc.



Emergency Planning

The Town Council is currently working on a review of its Emergency Plan which covers flooding, snow, loss of utilities, pandemic flu, animal health, etc. Whilst the Emergency Services do an excellent job (as we all witnessed during March's extreme weather conditions), it's clear that we need to be ready at a local level to deal with some things. We are welcoming those who would like to put forward their names as community volunteers which includes those with 4x4 vehicles who might be able to help out in snowy conditions or can bring some expertise to our Working Party, led by Cllr Susie Price, which is reviewing the Plan. Anyone interested in helping with this should contact the Town Council offices.



Neighbourhood Plan

Cllrs Hall and Cairns are Chair and Vice Chair of the Steering Group leading the production of the Marlborough Area Neighbourhood Plan (MANP) which covers land use in Marlborough and the neighbouring parishes of Mildenhall, Preshute and Savernake. The group is made up of representatives from those parishes as well as other interested groups and individuals.

During 2017/18, follow-up analysis of the 2017 Housing Needs Analysis has been given at open meetings and the document

itself passed to Wiltshire Council and other organisations to help inform decisions about development and housing need. A Car Parking Study was also undertaken by consultants People & Places and

based on an in-depth audit over four days in June 2017 which included a Wednesday (weekday market day), a Tuesday and Friday and a Saturday and backed up with an online survey. It provides



details of occupancy and turnover and identifies patterns and parking trends in and around the town centre. Analysis of this work was also given at a well-attended public meeting and the document passed onto other organisations including Parking Services at Wiltshire Council.

The Steering Group is now working towards a Call for Sites.

The MANP website is at www.manp.co.uk

Planning Committee

Chairman: Councillor Alexander Kirk Wilson

All Town Councillors sit on this committee (with the Mayor in an ex-officio role so with no vote) and have met every three weeks over the year to consider planning applications, road closures, premises licences, works to trees and relevant planning associated consultations. In total, the committee met 17 times in 2017/18.



Planning Applications

It's important to remember that the Town Council is a consultee on planning issues – decisions are made by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) – Wiltshire Council. Here's a look at the number of planning applications received this year compared to 2016/17:

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18*
Town Council Comment	Planning Applications	Planning Applications	Planning Applications
No objection	133	136	171
Objection	18	10	5
Total applications received	151	146	176

**to 9 April 2018*

Of the total applications received in 2017/18, Wiltshire Council refused 3 of them. None of the applications where the Town Council had raised objections were refused.

Over the last year, there have been a small number of controversial issues around planning applications, appeals and developments including those concerning the disposal of land for development at Rabley Wood View, the future of the former St Peter's School and the application for Village Green status for land at Barton Park.

Councillors attended Wiltshire Council committee meetings to represent the Town Council's views on the Rabley Wood land disposal, issues around the Redrow Development on land off Salisbury Road as well as the future of the St Peter's School site. In fact, liaison with Redrow has resulted in

a change in the original housing mix at the site so that more 1, 2 and 3 bedroomed houses are now to be included.

There have been some very well supported planning applications too which have included a new hotel to be built at Salisbury Road, something the Town Council has long campaigned for, and the refurbishment of a former Chapel in The Parade to create a cinema for Marlborough – a highly popular proposal.

Some meetings have included presentations - Homes4Wiltshire, a Railway Station for Marlborough and amended plans for development at Bridge Garage.

The town's two Unitary Councillors - Cllrs Stewart Dobson and Nick Fogg - are also very active in representing local people on planning issues.

Consultations

Councillors have responded to consultations including the Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations paper, Wiltshire Council's Local Plan Review and Car Parking Charges (strong objections were made to Wiltshire Council raising concerns about the parking charge increases, in particular the rise in the costs of season tickets and the impact of this on local retailers and businesses). The Town Council also issued a letter expressing its concern about the reduction in local bus services.

The Town Council has also issued its own consultation around 20mph speed restrictions.

Flooding

Our Flood Warden, Cllr Kirk Wilson and his Deputy, Cllr Peter Cairns keep a close eye on flooding and regularly attend Wiltshire's Operational Flood Working Groups and keep up to date with the Environmental Agency's flood information and warnings.

Trees

Marlborough's Tree Warden, Councillor Bryan Castle, has a vast knowledge of the town's trees and advises on various applications for works (e.g. felling, pollarding). A total of 19 applications were received in 2017/18.

WORK TO TREES

	2016/17	2017/18
No objection	44	19
Objection	3	0
Total	47	19

**to 9 April 2018*



In March 2018, the Planning Committee requested an enforcement investigation around the felling of trees at the Bridge Garage, London Road.

Street Naming

In Wiltshire, developers are obliged to liaise with town and parish councils when making decisions on naming new streets. Redrow contacted the Town Council for input on 6 new streets and once Wiltshire Council agreement had been secured, it was decided that they would be named after a small number of those in Marlborough who had served in the Great War. We are told that this will include a street named after Elsie Knocker (Elsie Knocker Grove) who was a WW1 nursing heroine who grew up in the town. (Elsie even appears with her friend, Mairi Chisholm, on a special commemorative Royal Mail stamp).



Transport – Community Area Transport Group

The Town Council's representatives to the Area Board's Community Area Transport Group (CATG) are Cllr Peter Cairns and Cllr Andy Wilson. This group looks at Highways and transport issues across the Community Area. Issues raised and influenced by the Town Council at this group include traffic orders, speed limits, metro counts, Highways project spending, dropped kerbs, signage, waiting and parking restrictions and weight limits and freight restrictions. Air Quality is an increasingly important issue too. CATG also deals with a number of concerns logged on Wiltshire Council's Issues Log.



The Assessment Report about options for 20mph speed restrictions in Marlborough was commissioned by this group. Before the Town Council reaches a decision on the options put forward, it has launched a public consultation and will use this feedback to help inform that decision.

SIDs

During 2018/19, the Planning Committee will consider purchasing a Speed Indicator Device (known as a SID) for the town. Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) flash the current speed limit (e.g. 30, 40), if a vehicle approaches which is exceeding that speed. We will be working closely with the Area Highways Engineer on this project.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a charge that local planning authorities can place on development in their area. Where a Neighbourhood Plan has been published, a town or parish council is entitled to 25% of this levy and where there is no Plan, there is a 15% entitlement. Payments totalling £41,213.25 have been received in the last year and this has been allocated to the refurbishment of the Community & Youth Centre and also to the forthcoming upgrading of the Cooper's Meadow Play Area. Both of these projects met the strict criteria set down on this funding.

Finance and Policy Committee

Chairman: Councillor Andrew Ross



The Finance & Policy Committee is responsible for the management of the Council's finances and setting of its policies and met 4 times in 2017/18. Its most important work is to steer the Town Council in setting its budget for the forthcoming year. It considers what funds it needs (the costs of running services, staff salaries, capital projects, etc.) and matches its estimates against planned income (funds from investments, rental income, venue hire and more). The difference is the shortfall it needs to raise from local council tax payers, known as the precept. Wiltshire Council collects this on behalf of the Town Council and it is paid in two instalments during the financial year.

The overall Council Tax you pay helps towards a variety of services. The largest proportion is for those provided by Wiltshire Council - education, roads, car parks, bin collections, social services, etc. right across the county. Also collected by Wiltshire Council are the precepts set by Wiltshire Police Authority and Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Services. The proportion of the Council Tax collected for the running of your Town Council and your most local services is around 10% of your overall annual Council Tax bill.

How your Town Council spends your money

Ownership and/or maintenance and management of – the Town Hall, the Community & Youth Centre, 3 commercial and 8 residential properties, The Common, The Green, Salisbury Road Recreational Ground, Elcot Lane Playing Fields, Skate Park, 6 Children's Play Areas, Priory Gardens, Wye House Gardens, St. Mary's Churchyard, Stonebridge and Coopers Meadows, 3 Allotment sites, 2 War Memorials, Town Floral Displays, Football Pitches and the Cemeteries as well as more than 1500 trees

Management of public toilets

Management of a CCTV system

Consultation and assessment of all relevant planning applications

Administration of burial records, cemetery space, plaques and memorials

Event management – Royal Visits, Civic Dinners, Christmas Lights Event (including maintenance and erection Christmas Lights and associated Market) and other community events

Civic work around Military links, Remembrance Day Parade, etc.

Administration of a Small Grants Scheme

Local communication via the website, social media, newsletter and notice boards

Work towards securing external grant funding and implementing new projects

Information about Wiltshire Council services and liaison with other external agencies (e.g. VisitWiltshire)

Setting Budgets

Each year, Town Councillors scrutinise budget lines carefully to ensure best value but, there are costs over which there is little or no control – tax, superannuation, national insurance, local government national salary rises, utilities, business rates, etc. The Town Council receives no revenue funding from central government and a council tax support grant previously passed on from Wiltshire Council stopped with effect from 1 April 2017. It does not receive a share of revenue from Business Rates.

Just under 25% of the Town Council's budget requirement is met through income other than local council tax (precept). The Town Council looks to maximise income where it can to help keep the precept demand on local residents as low as it sensibly can. This income is generated by rents received from residential and commercial properties, cemetery fees, sports pitch charges, open space and venue hire as well as investment and bank interest.

The Town Council also looks for external grant funding and in 2017/18 it was successful in its bids for grants to a total of £29,421 for refurbishment work on the Community and Youth Centre, the Puppet Festival and Neighbourhood Plan project work. There were also donations from organisations and individuals towards projects totalling £4,000.

Reserves

As at 31st March, unaudited accounts show that general reserves (also known as free reserves) are in excess of £200,000. Ear marked reserves total £441,624. (These are set aside for specific projects). The audited accounts will be available to view from the end of June 2018.

Fixed Assets

The Town Council owns the Town Hall, the Council offices and residential, community and commercial properties. Other assets include open spaces (e.g. Priory Gardens, Wye House and Plume of Feathers Gardens), play areas and associated equipment as well as vehicles and equipment needed to maintain all of our sites.

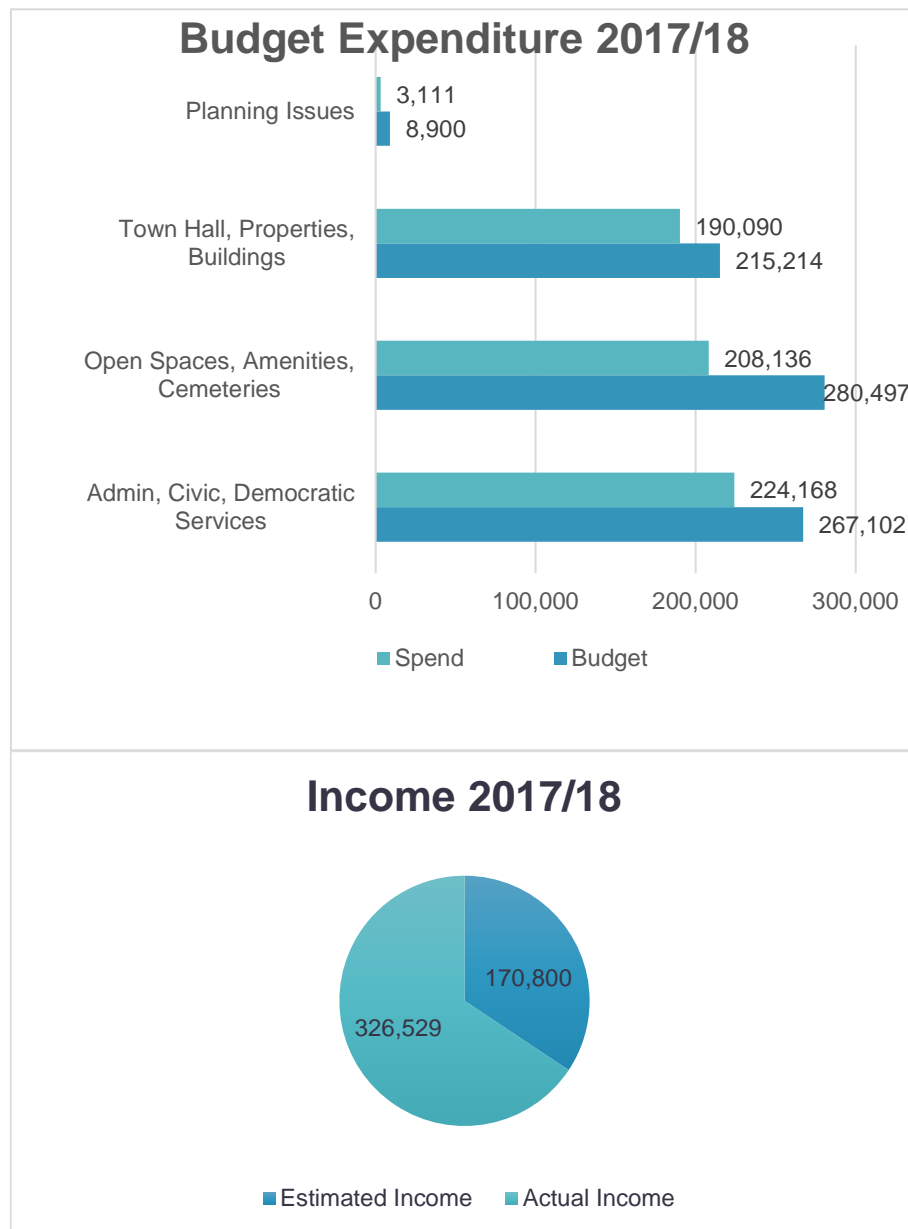
Borrowing

In 2016/17, the Town Council took on a loan from the Public Works Loan Board of £90,190 at a preferential annual rate of interest of 1.62% with annual payments of £9,805.66 over a 10 year period. This was to fund refurbishment work at the public toilets at George Lane. No further loans were taken out in 2017/18.

Devolution of Services and Asset Transfers

Central government has put in place measures that impact hugely upon the resources of principal authorities such as Wiltshire Council where a number of savings and cuts have had to be made so that social care services can be properly maintained. There is a knock-on effect on town and parish councils. As Wiltshire Council's services are, in some cases, reduced, towns and parishes may have to consider picking up some of this work or top up the level of service provided (e.g. grass cutting or litter picking). For example, in the last 18 months, Marlborough Town Council has taken on the Public Toilets at George Lane Car as a Community Asset Transfer and under a lease arrangement, the Marlborough Community & Youth Centre. A new policy has recently been adopted by Wiltshire Council to look at transferring a package of freehold asset transfers and devolved services to towns. We are expecting to be informed more about this over the coming months.

Budget Expenditure and Income - 2017/18



The income chart shows an increase of 91% in estimated income. This is mainly due to the proceeds from the sale of Chantry Lane Toilets and advance payments of booking fees for the Town Hall for 2018/19.

It's important to remember that these figures have been taken from unaudited accounts.

The Annual Return and full audited accounts will be published by the end of June and will be available for the public to view.

Councillor Allowances

Only the Town Mayor receives an allowance for civic duties. In 2017/18 this was £3,400. There is also a set travel allowance of £650 to cover travel expenses (the current Mayor has attended more than 110 functions/events in Wiltshire and further afield during 2017/18). A small budget of £500 has been set aside for Councillor travel expenses. Only £174 of this was drawn down in 2017/18.

Local Council Tax (Precept) for 2018/19

Councillors made a decision to raise the precept by 2.9% for 2018/19. This represents a rise to £187.97pa and equates to an increase over that set in 2017/18 (£182.67 pa) of £5.30 a year or 44p a month for average Band D households.

Grant Awards

With a budget of £6,600, the Finance & Policy Committee has granted awards to eight organisations, all meeting criteria showing that the work they do benefits Marlborough:

GRANT RECIPIENT	AMOUNT
MacMillan	£200
Marlborough St Mary's	£2244
Alzheimers Support	£500
Greatwood Charity	£427
Marlborough Development Trust	£440
Marlborough Area Poverty Action Group	£500
Marlborough Dyslexia Association	£260
The Merchant's House	£2029



Property Committee

Chairman: Councillor Guy Loosmore

The Property Committee is responsible for all Town Council owned properties including the Town Hall and has met 4 times in the last year. In 2017/18 the income stream from the Town Hall and Council-owned or maintained properties has raised approximately 68% of our estimated income – all helping to keep down the precept bill. The insured value of property within the Town Council's responsibility is in excess of £11m.



Town Hall



The day to day running of the Grade II Listed Town Hall is managed by our Office Manager, Sue Fry, who also oversees the work of our busy Caretaker, Alan Brown.

An approximate breakdown of bookings for 2017/18 is shown in the table.

Work continues around day to day maintenance through service agreements, annual machinery checks and health and safety inspections. In the last year, all lightbulbs have been replaced with more economical LED versions, there is a new commercial fridge in the Assembly Room kitchen as well as new cookers. Plans for 2018/19 include creating space in the basement for storage for the Town Museum as well as a public toilet.

FUNCTION	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Wedding receptions	7	5	11
Wedding ceremonies	16	18	29
Sales, craft fairs, fundraising coffee mornings	27	25	18
Meetings (excluding Town Council)	32	37	31
Film nights	41	33	24
Private parties, training events, fundraising nights, other	58	55	66
TOTAL	181	173	179

Commercial and Residential Properties

The Council owns three shops and eight residential properties. In 2016/17, two studio flats at 3, Kingsbury Street were purchased from Aster Housing and underwent extensive refurbishment. All of these corporate properties are now managed and rented out through our professional Property Agents, Carter Jonas.

Different arrangements are in place for some Council-owned assets from which community groups or Trusts operate (e.g. The Merchants House, the Bowls Club, Rugby Club, Boxing Club, etc.).



Public Toilets

In April 2017, Wiltshire Council closed its toilets at George Lane Car Park and the building was taken on by the Town Council with new unisex toilets opening in April 2017. It was originally intended to sell the public toilets at Chantry Lane to fund the refurbishment work, but this would have meant a period of time when Marlborough would have been without any public toilets. So, instead, the Council took out a public loan from the Public Works Loan Board - a statutory government organisation that lends at preferential rates to local authorities - to enable refurbishment work to start. Once the new, modern toilets were open, the site at Chantry Lane was closed and sold at auction. The proceeds (£159,029), which, under the transfer arrangements with Wiltshire Council, must be used to fund the George Lane project, will enable the installation of another toilet cubicle, CCTV and possibly a room for community use, storage and a small Information Point to fit with the town's increasing tourism needs.



There is a usage charge for the toilets of 20p which will help to offset loan repayments and running costs – cleaning, utilities, business rates, etc.

Marlborough Community & Youth Centre

In June 2017, Marlborough Town Council took on a seven year lease for the former Youth Centre at St Margaret's Mead after cutbacks at Wiltshire Council meant that the building would have been mothballed leaving the town with no place for its community and young people to meet and socialise. The Town Council campaigned hard to raise funds and refurbish the building, bringing it up to a standard that will mean it can be used by the whole community.



Lottery funding, an Area Board grant, contributions from developers, McCarthy & Stone, plus generous donations from voluntary groups and those in the local community has meant that the project quickly moved forward. The new look Marlborough Community and Youth Centre was opened with a celebratory event in December 2017. It now has a multi-use hall for sports and events, a music room, football changing facilities, a kitchen, a TV room with a pool table, a computer suite and an office. There's also CCTV, an intruder alarm and an access system to make the building safe for everyone. Local groups are already making bookings. Here are the bookings since the start of 2018:

FUNCTION	NUMBER OF HIRINGS
Youth Groups	23
Fitness Groups/Clubs	15
Football	8
Meetings	6
Parties/Private Hire (inc. organisations)	9
Pre-school Groups	4
TOTAL	65



The building is very ably managed by Office Manager, Sue Fry, who deals with all hiring enquiries and the day to day running of the Centre. Sue has many years experience of venue management. Martin Phipps is our part time Caretaker at the site.



Staffing Sub-Committee

Chairman: Councillor Peggy Dow

The Staffing Sub-Committee meets as required to discuss staffing and management issues and has met 7 times over the last year. The staff is headed-up by qualified Town Clerk, Shelley Parker and in 2017/18 the Council employed 8 full time and 3 part time members of staff plus 2 seasonal workers.

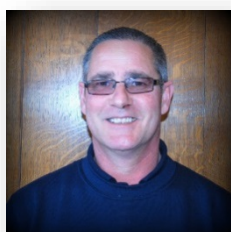


Staff are based at 3 sites – the Council Offices at 5, High Street, the Workshop and Community and Youth Centre at the Recreational Ground off Salisbury Road. The Town Clerk and Senior Managers, Sue Fry and Nigel Weatherly, have overseen day to day administration, venue and event management, accounts, democratic services, civic occasions, tourist information, managed the commercial and residential property portfolio as well as project management and the upkeep and maintenance of our gardens, cemeteries and other open spaces. Also covered are the many enquiries received from residents and visitors and sharing of information via our website and social media.

Workload has increased considerably in the last 18 months as the Town Council has taken on the toilets at George Lane, the Community & Youth Centre and 2 new flats. In the last year, staff have had responsibilities for event management around the Mop Fairs, Christmas Lights Switch-on with a Christmas Market, the Remembrance Parade and a Civic Dinner as well as being heavily involved in the Puppet Festival. Associated work around these events involves organising road closures, diversion signage and parking.

This is all alongside the day to day work around running council services – litter picking, cutting grass, organising burials, work to trees, planting, venue hire, research and report writing, etc. The Town Council has a land ownership far higher than most councils of a comparable size and this all affects the workload in terms of maintaining it as well as insurance, liability and legal implications that sit with it.

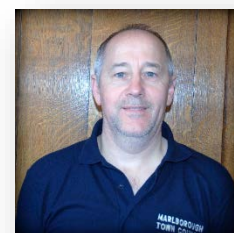
A Staffing Review will take place in the spring to ensure that staffing capacity is at the right level to meet the challenges that will come as we take on more assets and services from Wiltshire Council.



Welcome to....

We welcome [Nigel Weatherly](#) as our Grounds Manager. Previously, Nigel was our Foreman and promoted into this role in November 2017. With almost 30 years of experience in the field of grounds maintenance, he is a valuable asset to the Council. He heads up a skilled and busy Grounds Team.

A recent recruit to the Grounds Team is [Mark Stroud](#) who has been with us for a number of months as a seasonal worker and taken on in a permanent role at the end of March 2018. Many local people will remember him as their Royal Mail Postman and we are delighted that he has joined our team.



[Martin Phipps](#) joined as an Assistant Caretaker in spring 2017 working with Alan Brown in the Town Hall. Most of his time is now spent at our Community & Youth Centre where he

has quickly got to grips with the running of the building and has already built up a good rapport with our customers.

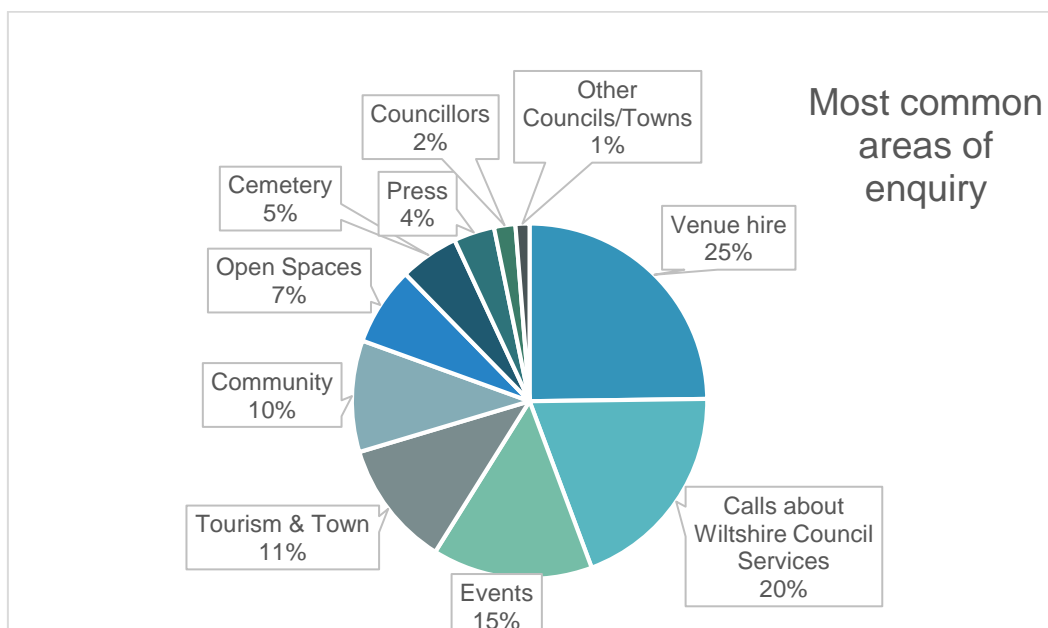
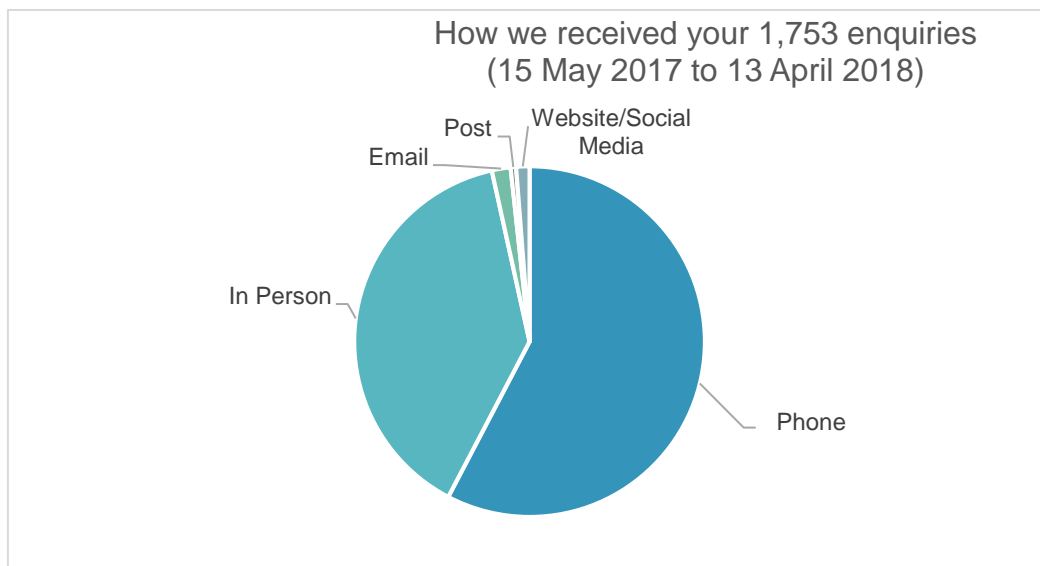
Congratulations

Our congratulations go to our Apprentice, [Michael Haines](#), who, after 3 years studying part time at Lackham College has achieved his Level 3 qualification in Work-based Horticulture. In 2016, he also received an award as Apprentice of the Year. Well done.



Enquiries

The following gives an idea of the enquiries received by our enquiry point on a daily basis. These figures exclude other business-related enquiries received direct by members of staff.



Website and Social Media

A key part of our work is to ensure that information is communicated to local residents and that they are kept informed about the activities of their Town Council. Our IT savvy and skilled Administrator, Dawn Whitehall, makes sure that the Town Council website at www.marlbrough-tc.gov.uk is kept up to date with details about events, visitor information, key contacts, meeting agendas and minutes, the Mayor's Blog, financial information, our latest consultations and much more. We also have our own Facebook page and a Twitter account.



Councillors' thanks go to all staff – Shelley Parker, Sue Fry, Linda Chapman, Alan Brown, Martin Phipps, Dawn Whitehall, Barbara Chandler, Nigel Weatherly, Ryan Atcherley, Aaron Presley, Michael Haines, Mark Stroud and our seasonal worker, Dave Martin.

Amenities and Open Spaces Committee

Chairman: Councillor Lisa Farrell

In total, the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee met six times in 2017/18. Integral to its work is our Grounds Team based at the Workshop at the Recreation Ground at Salisbury Road. The team maintains various open spaces in and around Marlborough - The Common, The Green, Priory and Wye House Gardens, the Recreation Ground, Jubilee Field at Manton, cemeteries, play areas and much more. They cut grass, pick litter, maintain our street furniture and bus shelters, plant and look after floral displays and bedding and keep an eye on the condition of trees – all the things that make a difference to residents and have a real impact on our visitors.



South West in Bloom – Gold Award

Along with Marlborough in Bloom and sitting alongside some fierce competition from larger towns, our Grounds Team worked hard towards winning the town the accolade of a Gold Award at the RHS South West in Bloom 2017 competition which was presented to the Mayor and members of the In Bloom committee at a prestigious awards ceremony in Torquay in October.

The Its Your Neighbourhood (IYN) community entrants did exceptionally well too – huge congratulations to everyone involved and good luck with the 2018 entry.



Coopers Meadow Play Area

A long overdue upgrade of the play area at Coopers Meadow has been discussed over the last few months. With its complex drainage issues (the play area sits in a water meadow), funding has been an obstacle to moving this project forward. However, there is now approximately £43,250 available for the project from S106 Agreements and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payments. A Working Party headed up by Cllr Mark Cooper will drive the project forward and there will be consultation with users too.

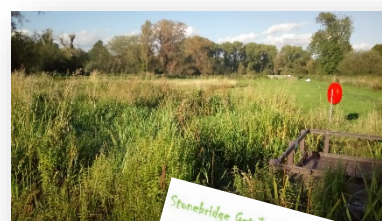


We are looking forward to the return of sheep into the grazing area in 2018 – something really special in the centre of Marlborough.

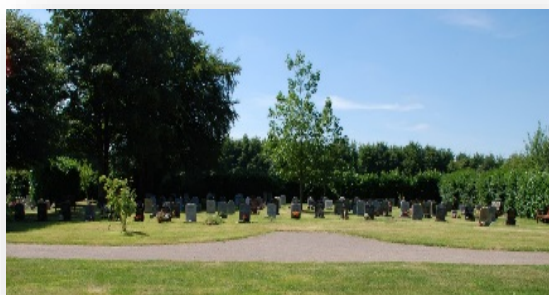
Stonebridge Meadow

This meadow is jointly owned by the Town Council and Action for the River Kennet (ARK) and continues to thrive. Our Grounds Team works closely with the ARK Project Officer, Anna Forbes, to ensure that this haven of tranquility is properly maintained. Another winner of a well-deserved IYN award from the RHS.

There have been a number of popular ARK activities throughout the year including a Big Picnic in the late summer and many events for those of all ages. There was also an Open Meeting in February to review the Management Plan for the meadow.



Cemetery



The Grounds Team continues to make improvements to the cemetery and maintains the area to a high standard. The Council is looking for additional space for a cemetery extension and this is being addressed through the Neighbourhood Plan. Our staff are responsible for the digging and preparation of burial plots.

BURIALS AND INTERMENTS	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Ashes	11	7	15	13
Interments				
Burials	9	8	14	20

Our Civic Secretary, Linda Chapman, works closely with the Grounds Team, funeral directors and stonemasons to ensure that burials and interments are handled sympathetically and with dignity.

Victorian Cemetery

Former Mayor, Margaret Rose, heads up The Friends of the Old Victorian Cemetery which continues to make a number of improvements at this closed cemetery. These volunteers, supported by the Grounds Team, have been working hard towards clearing this area through cutting back overgrowth and planting wild flowers. Another worthy winner in the IYN category of South West in Bloom.



This year the overgrown Yew hedge has been professionally cut making a real difference, especially to walkers. In 2018/19, the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM) has been commissioned to produce a Management Plan for the site.

The Common

Events and activities continue to take place here. As well as continued use by the Rugby Club, Youth Football Club, Golf Club and Marlborough Model Flying Club, we now welcome a very impressive Marlborough Tennis Club. This year we have seen a circus, car boot sales, a fair, pigeon liberations and more. There are now discussions going ahead with the popular Parkrun organisation to begin running on Saturday mornings.



Plume of Feathers

The Town Council owns this garden close to the centre of town and lets the site under a peppercorn lease arrangement to the Richmond Fellowship, a charity working with those needing mental health support. The Fellowship has some excellent projects and also won an IYN award in the 2017 South West in Bloom competition.



Dog Fouling



In partnership with Drove Veterinary Hospital, a poster campaign has been launched to remind people to clear up after their dogs. The vast majority of dog owners are responsible and bag and bin waste and we are trying to encourage everyone to follow their example. These

posters are displayed in all Town Council-owned open spaces.



Litter Picking – The Great British Spring Clean

The snow put off our first litter picking weekend, but the Town Council, Marlborough in Bloom and volunteers were able to join forces on 16 and 17 March to help clear up round the town. Main areas covered were the Salisbury Road and Recreation Ground and the Barton Park area. Many thanks to those who turned out to help.



Allotment Association

Marlborough Town Council has three allotment sites, two of which they own and one on land leased from the St John's Trust. The allotments are administered by Marlborough Town Council and are maintained jointly by the Council and Marlborough Allotment Association. Allotmenters at Stonebridge Allotments have overcome drainage concerns and deservedly won an award in the South West in Bloom competition in 2017. The Allotment Association has been headed up by Chairman, Roger Harris.



Civic and Ceremonial

The Town Mayor is supported by our Civic Secretary, Mrs Linda Chapman, who works hard coordinating the Mayor's many engagements and Town Council-led civic events including Mayor-Making, Civic Services and Civic Dinners as well as Remembrance Sunday. Mrs Chapman also works in close liaison with 4 Military Intelligence Battalion and our Officers of Dignity.

Our Officers of Dignity

Our honorary Macebearers, Bob Dobie and Barry Mercer, attended 12 civic events this year which have included the Merchant's House Peppercorn Rent Ceremony, Mop Fair Opening, Remembrance Day, Christmas Lights Switch-on, Marlborough College Carol Service and the Marlborough Puppet Festival.

Our Town Crier, Mike Tupman, has attended each of these and made 'shouts' at fêtes and other events too. It's not unusual to see him in the High Street during the weekend, giving a warm welcome to our visitors. He is also a regular interviewee at BBC Wiltshire and, in the last year, has represented the town in 3 Town Crier competitions, reaching third place in the Calne competition.

We are grateful for the effort put in by our Officers of Dignity for showcasing Marlborough's historic traditions so well.



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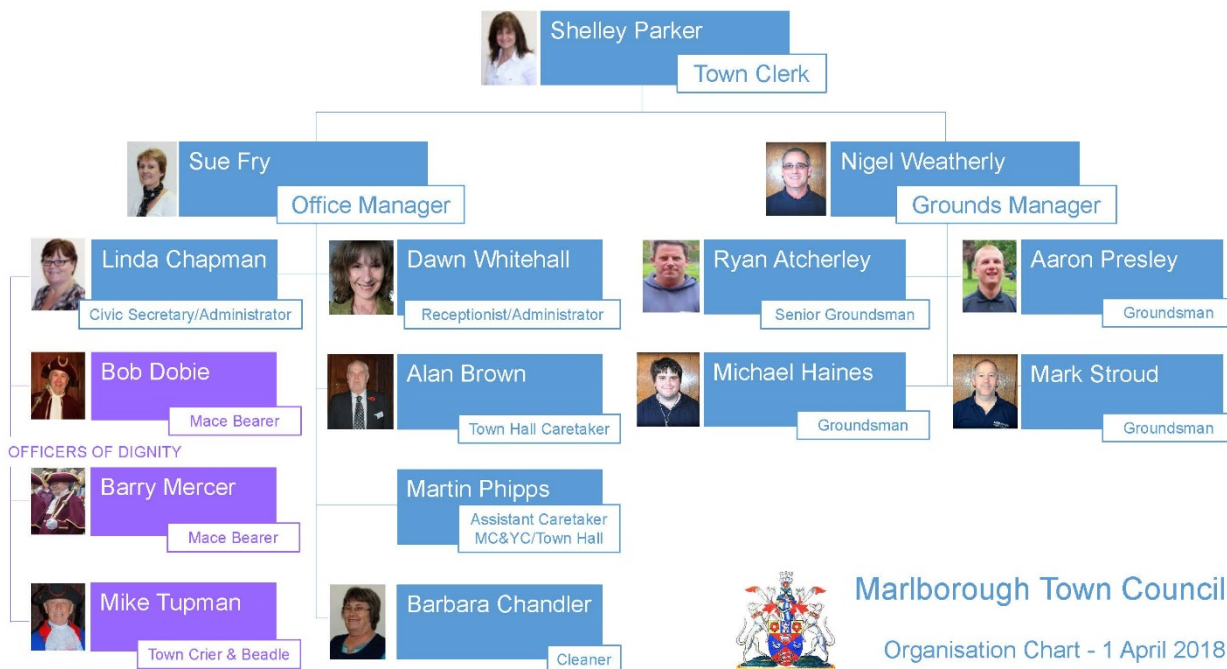


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Marlborough Town Council

Organisation Chart - 1 April 2018

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