



SOUTH WOODHAM FERRERS
TOWN COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

TOWN MAYOR COUNCILLOR DONNA ELEY



It has been another busy year for the Town Council.

Along with my Deputy Mayor, Cllr Toni Perham Lake, we have had the pleasure to meet and speak to many SWF residents at the sixty plus engagements we have carried out this year.

The Town Council have arranged and provided a wide range of new activities, facilities and events.

Since August 2023, Barclays Bank has provided a well-attended Barclays Local in the upstairs meeting room. Essex Police has provided regular Police Surgeries/Let's Talk Sessions at CMH, with the most recent being held on Friday evening, 15th March 2024.

The ever popular Fun at Champions Manor Hall was held weekly during August. Play in the Park at Saltcoats Park/Compass Gardens and run on the Town Council's behalf by Chelmsford City Council was well attended during the Easter and summer school holidays. This year there was a play session during the Easter holidays, being held at Saltcoats Park with an inflatable assault course. The Seniors Film Club held every month on the second Wednesday continues to prove popular. March's film "Oppenheimer" had an audience of nearly 50 despite being three hours long! Free tea, coffee and biscuits are provided and has been usually served by the Town Mayor. All for only £5.00 per year membership.

New events in the coming year included an Easter Egg Hunt held on 2nd April 2024, which sold out within a week. Save the Dates for your diary are 6th June 2024 and 8th June 2024 for D-Day 80th Anniversary Celebrations. More details can be found on the Town Council website and Facebook page. www.southwoodhamferrerstc.gov.uk The popular Kid's Halloween Party, Christmas Fayre, Seniors Christmas Party and a Christmas Pantomime are also planned for 2024.

All these events and activities, are planned and agreed by the Events, Community and Leisure Committee along with our hard-working and enthusiastic staff.

The Planning and Environment Committee have considered and made comment on 72 planning applications, up to 30th April 2024, as consultees to Chelmsford City Council. Our Environment Officer, has been busy developing an updated a Climate and Environment Plan and overseeing the maintenance and improvements in the John Cox recreation area and Woodham Fen and Garden of Remembrance.

The Finance and Projects Committee have had a busy year streamlining and helping audit the Council's finances. Projects approved include the updating and improvement of the facilities at Champions Manor Hall. This includes all the internal areas of the whole building have been painted, new blinds replaced in the two halls and a new television in the conference room upstairs.

A project for solar panel is ongoing in collaboration with Chelmsford City Council to consider the best proposal.

Grants have been issued to several local groups including United in Kind for Dementia Week. The rise in energy costs and inflationary pressures, has meant that balancing the budget proved to be a time-consuming task. I am pleased to say that, once again, South Woodham Ferrers Town Council were able to achieve one of the lowest parish council increases in Essex. With an increase of only 0.85p to £73.45 for a typical Band D property, a rise of just 1% for 2024/25.

In the office, all staff do a fantastic job organising and handling the day-to-day activities of the Council, dealing with residents queries and planning and organising the many events the Town Council. I would like to personally thank the staff for all their enthusiasm and hard work. Our ESO's continue to tirelessly help keep our streets tidy. One ESO has extended hours and taken on a new role, in an effort to keep our town, clean, safe and tidy. If you see any areas in our town that you think need attention, please report them to our Town Clerk by telephone on 01245 321817 or email katkins@southwoodhamferrerstc.gov.uk.

You may have noticed the recent improvement around the Town Centre with the removal of the weeds!

Our Town Councillors continue to commit their valuable time to the work of the Town Council. Without their interest and volunteering we would not be able to hold all the events and provide the activities that we do. So, my continued thanks to all our Town Councillors.



South Woodham Ferrers Annual Town Meeting was held on Thursday 23rd April 2024 at Champions Manor Hall from 7pm. There were displays from Community Groups and refreshments. Speakers included Julie Taylor from the Liam Taylor Legacy, who spoke about her personal experience of knife crime and the importance of bleed kits, and Police Sergeant Matt Collins from Essex Police, plus presentations from all the Chairs of the Council Committees. The Mayor of Chelmsford, Linda Mascot also attended. I had the pleasure to present the Distinguished Honours Awards to the well-deserved nominees and the Town Mayor's Award to William de Ferrers student, Jack Hughes. The winners of the photography competition were also presented with their awards. The Mayor's Charity, since September 2023, has been Haven's Hospice, in particular, Little Haven's, and I presented them with a cheque for £799.75 the total of the donations raised during the past six months.

This will be the final written update from me this year. I have been proud and pleased to meet and represent the residents of South Woodham Ferrers in my second year as Town Mayor. I enjoyed seeing you at the Annual Town Meeting but in the meantime....

Stay Safe & Best Wishes

Cllr. Donna Eley



PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Chairman: Councillor Alan Shearring

Vice Chairman: Councillor Scott Wilson

The following matters are reserved and delegated to the Environment Committee: Issues in and around South Woodham Ferrers to include the following: Traffic Management, Litter Control, Roads, Pavements and Footpaths, Signage, Public Transport, Garden of Remembrance, Millennium Place and the town sign, Woodham Fenn, hanging baskets and sponsored roundabout.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND CONSULTATIONS

Monthly meetings to discuss local planning applications put through to Chelmsford City Council average to about 9 applications every meeting. In addition to these, responses have also been prepared and submitted on the Sandon Neighbourhood Plan consultation and the Maldon Transport Strategy consultation.

JOHN COX

Works to clear and maintain land at John Cox has begun and is ongoing.



INSTALLATION OF A LIFE RING

After receiving reports of children/young people swimming in the Creek at the Fenn, a life ring was installed.

GARDENING COMPETITION

A gardening competition was held during the Spring/Summer of 2023 with prizes kindly donated by Meadow Croft.



HANGING BASKETS AND PLANTERS

Floral displays are provided in the town centre & other retail locations. Hanging baskets also provide a lovely colourful display around town.



GARDEN OF REMEMBRANCE

The Garden of Remembrance continues to be popular with residents and their families. If you would like any information on the Garden please contact the office on 01245 321817.



ENHANCED SERVICE

The Town Council will be providing an enhanced service so if you see any areas, alleyways or issues that need attention in town please report to the Town Council and we will schedule the work or if not possible ourselves we will signpost for attention of others.

TREE SURVEY

a tree survey undertaken of all trees situated on Town Council owned land. Following this, works required on any trees identified is and is still ongoing, and is scheduled for completion during 2024.

EVENTS, COMMUNITY & LEISURE COMMITTEE

Chairman: Councillor Russ Crosbie

Vice Chairman: Councillor Annie Humphrey

The following matters are reserved and delegated to the Events, Community & Leisure Committee: Children's Play Area and Blue Cage Hullbridge Road, the Bowling Green, Allotments, the Bandstand, leisure facilities and delivery of the Town Council's annual programme of events.

SWIMMING POOL

The Town Council contributed £10,000 towards the running of the swimming pool at the Leisure Centre.

PLAY IN PARK

The Town Council fund the Play in the Park schemes organised by Chelmsford City Council in South Woodham Ferrers. These free sessions are provided during the summer months and held at Saltcoats Park. Details of the sessions are available on the Town Council's website.

OTHER EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

2023/24 saw the continuation with; the Toddler Group on a Monday morning, the monthly Seniors Film Club, a Children's Halloween Party and Summer Fun at Champions Manor Hall. The Youth Club on a Tuesday evening run by YMCA on behalf of the Town Council also opened its doors in September 2023. Also new for this year was an Armed Forces Day with several military vehicles etc., Easter Egg Hunt which saw 70+ children searching for eggs at Champions Manor Hall, and thanks go to Asda and Sainsbury for their egg donations.



YOUTH WEEK

New for the Summer of 2023 was the introduction of extra youth activities which took place over 1 week in the Summer holidays.



KING CHARLES III CORONATION

May 2023 saw the country celebrate King Charles III Coronation. The Town Council put on the following events to join in with the national celebrations; Senior's Coronation Lunch and 'The Big Lunch' event on the Village Hall playing fields for the town with a great turnout enjoying the music and stalls.

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS & CHRISTMAS ACTIVITIES

Christmas lights were erected in the town centre by the Council with a contribution from Asda and Chelmsford City Council. The Christmas Fayre went ahead as usual with a great turnout from residents. In addition the annual Senior's Christmas Lunch was also well attended with fun had by all. New for this year was a Pantomime (Cinderella) which was held at William de Ferrers to which 200 tickets were sold.



CHAMPIONS MANOR HALL

PARTY BOOKINGS

As is previous years, this year was no different and saw a large number of party bookings, usually at weekends. As well as usual celebration parties, the hall has also been hired for other events such as charity fundraising evenings. Champions Manor Hall will always try to accommodate any booking requirements and staff are always happy to answer any queries etc. please call 01245 321817 for further information.

REGULAR HIRE

We have had regular hirers in all year this year with more and more groups booking the facility. We hope to welcome more and more regular hirers, providing various activities for our residents.

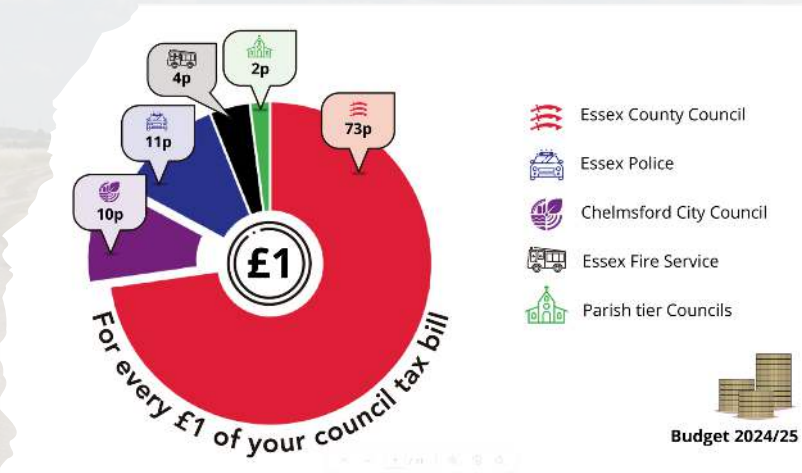
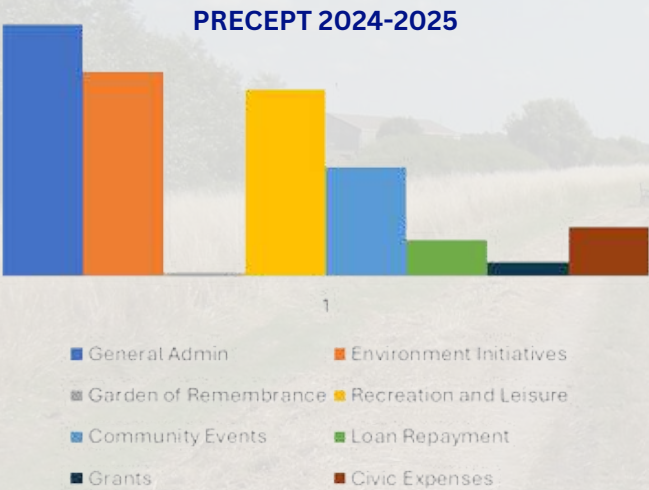
FINANCE & PROJECTS COMMITTEE

Chairman: Councillor Darren Thompson
Vice Chairman: Councillor Murrough O'Brien

The Finance & Projects Committee is responsible for Town Council land and premises as well as civic affairs and public relations, including;

- Agree and review council policies and procedures for full council to consider
- Agree financial policies and budgets for full council to consider
- Consider new projects to enhance the local community

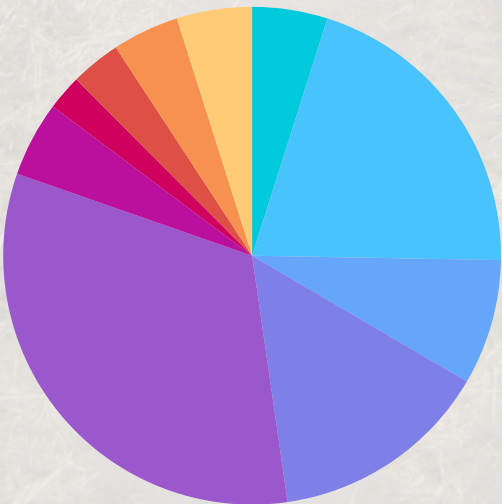
The Committee co-ordinates the budgetary process and recommends a precept to cover the annual expenses of the Council, which is determined at a Council meeting in January each year. For the financial year 2024/2025 the Band D Precept has increased by £0.85p to £73.45 an increase of 1%. The precept for 2024/25 is £449,200.



GRANTS AWARDED

For the financial year ending 31 March 2024 the grants shown on the chart were awarded under the Town Council's Grants scheme.

If you have a project that you think may meet the Town Council's criteria please contact the office on 01245 321817 or visit our website to download an application form.



PROJECTS

Champions Manor Hall saw some upgrades including;

- redecoration of CMH
- new projector and screen in the Main Hall
- new fridge/freezer in the kitchen
- new 75" television screen for Conference Room
- replacement blinds in Main Hall and Multi-purpose Room

Solar Panels project at CMH ongoing

COUNCILLORS BY WARD

CHETWOOD WARD

Councillor Bob Massey
Councillor Ashley John
Councillor Alan Shearring
Councillor Russ Crosbie
Councillor Annie Humphrey

ELMWOOD WARD

Councillor Jackie Birch
Councillor Murrough O'Brien
Councillor Lisa Kelly
Councillor Terry Sherlock
Councillor Glenn Piesse

COLLINGWOOD WARD

Councillor Peter Ferry
Councillor Scott Wilson
Councillor Malcolm Sismey
Councillor Darren Thompson
Councillor Dudley Naslund

WOODVILLE WARD

Councillor Keith Bentley
Councillor Donna Eley
Councillor Ian Roberts
Councillor Toni Perham Lake
Councillor Pauline Price

THE COUNCIL AND ITS COMMITTEE SYSTEM

The Town Council's Committees meet throughout the Council year to assist in progressing the Council's business. Notices of all meetings are published on the Town Council website, noticeboards and in the Focus column.