



SOUTH WOODHAM FERRERS TOWN COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

TOWN MAYOR COUNCILLOR DONNA ELEY



The past year has seen the country return to normality, and as the government termed it "personal responsibility", following the restrictions of the previous two covid years. It has been a roller coaster of a council year, punctuated with several national royal events. Starting in June with country's joy in celebrating Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee, the sadness and respect in which her death was marked in September and will end in May of this year with a celebration for King Charles III's Coronation. One of my first duties as Mayor was attending the Platinum Jubilee Fayre held on the Village Hall Playing Fields and I was proud to light the Beacon on behalf of the residents of South Woodham Ferrers. The Town Council along with the Village Hall and Village Hall Playing Fields are in the throes of organising the Coronation Big Lunch & Fayre held on Sunday 7th May perfectly rounded off my Mayorship this year.

Throughout the year Champions Manor Hall has been pleased to see a steady increase in groups returning to hire it's two meeting rooms and two halls, and has welcomed new hirers, the facilities are to open for hire seven days a week. The Toddler group opened its doors on Monday 26th April 2022 and has proven to be a roaring success with the young families of SWF. It is ably run by volunteers on behalf of the Town Council and we are grateful for their enthusiasm and commitment in making the group the success it has become. The Seniors Film Club held on the second Wednesday of the month has seen a steady return to normality and it currently has over a hundred members and we had a

record attendance in February. The annual membership is up for renewal in April and costs £5.00 with free tea, coffee and biscuits.

The Planning & Environment Committee continues to consider, through a streamlined process and as consultee, all planning applications in and around SWF that are submitted to Chelmsford City Council. The members have considered and submitted comments for consultations in Maldon District Council and Chelmsford City Council areas which could impact SWF residents. Comments have been submitted for outline planning and full planning for the Development North of Burnham Road. Their work will continue scrutinising new planning applications as they are submitted and as the development progresses.

Events, Community and Leisure Committee have been busy throughout the year organising events for residents including the ever popular Seniors Parties including the Platinum Jubilee and Christmas Parties last year and the recent Coronation Big Lunch in May. During the August, Fun at Champions Manor Hall and the Halloween Party were popular with families. And I know this is said by each consecutive Town Mayor but the Christmas Fayre and Light switch-on, in my opinion, was the very best so far. The Parent & Toddler Group, Seniors Film Club and Youth Club fall under the Committee's remit too.

The Finance and Projects Committee is a more transparent Committee now and all councillors are welcome to sit on it. They have also had a busy year considering the Council's finances and considering ways to improve the income of Champion Manor Hall. It has been particularly difficult balancing the budget, but the Town Council's precept will only increase by 1%, £1.25, to £72.60 for a Band D property for the financial year 2023/4. One of the lowest parish council increases in Essex.

In the office we have a new Town Clerk, Karen Atkins along with a new Administrative Assistant, Debbie Edwards and a new Environment & Leisure Officer David Smith. Shaun and John, our ESO's, do a brilliant job of helping to keep our streets tidy and free of litter. My thanks also to all the Town Councillors for their support and advice this year, especially my Deputy Mayor Alan Shearring. All Councillors are volunteers and the time and effort they commit is very much appreciated. Without the hard work and commitment of our staff and Town Councillors, the Town Council would not be able to function and provide range of activities and events for our residents it does.

On the 17th March 2023 we held our Annual Town Meeting. This years interesting speaker was from Essex & Herts Air Ambulance. Many thanks to them and to all the local community stalls and businesses that attended this meeting. Also thank you to Rt Hon Sir John Whittingdale MP for also attending.

This year Council awarded two Distinguished Services awards. One posthumously to Mr Tony Graham for all his work with the Rotary and one award to Raymond Towey for arranging the litter pick events during the year. This year we also presented past awards that had been delayed due to Covid. Mrs Olive Anstead, Cllr Peter Wyatt and Jonathan Coggan.



This will be the last update by me for this Council year. I have been both pleased and proud to meet and represent, you, the residents this year.

Stay Safe and Best Wishes.
Councillor Donna Eley
Town Mayor.

EVENTS, COMMUNITY & LEISURE COMMITTEE

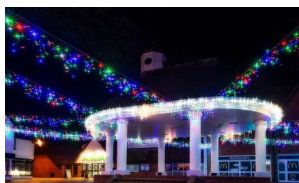
Chairman: Councillor Russ Crosbie & Vice Chairman Annie Humphrey

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.

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.



JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

June 2022 saw the country celebrate Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee. The Town Council put on the following events to join in with the national celebrations; Senior's Jubilee Lunch, Jubilee Fayre at South Woodham Ferrers Village Hall and Jubilee Celebrations at the Bandstand.

OTHER EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

2022/23 saw the continuation with; the Toddler Group on a Monday morning, the monthly Seniors Film Club, a Childrens' Halloween Party and Summer Fun at Champions Manor Hall.



SWIMMING POOL

The 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.

CHAMPIONS MANOR HALL COMMUNITY CENTRE



AIR CONDITIONING

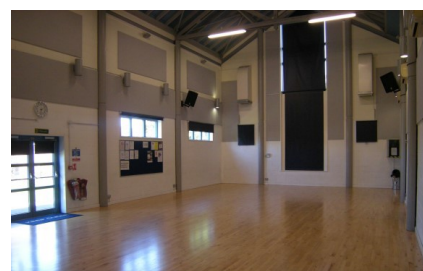
The end of 2022 saw the addition of air-conditioning controls mounted to the wall in each of our halls downstairs thus giving hirers control over their own temperature.

REGULAR HIRE

We have had regular hirers in all year this year with the exception to the period of national mourning for Queen Elizabeth II. We hope to welcome more and more regular hirers, providing various activities for our residents.

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.



Bookings available for Champions Manor Hall

Tel: 01245 321817

Email: debbie@southwoodhamferrerstc.gov.uk

Main Hall

Size: 140sqm (8.40m x 16.67m)
80-100 people

Multi-Purpose Room

Size: 105sqm (8.40m x 12.50m)
50-60 people

Conference Room

Seats 24 people

Meeting Room

Seats 20 people

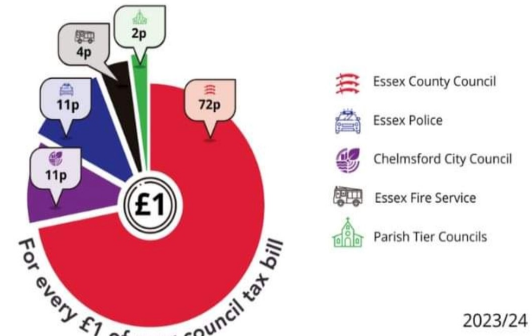
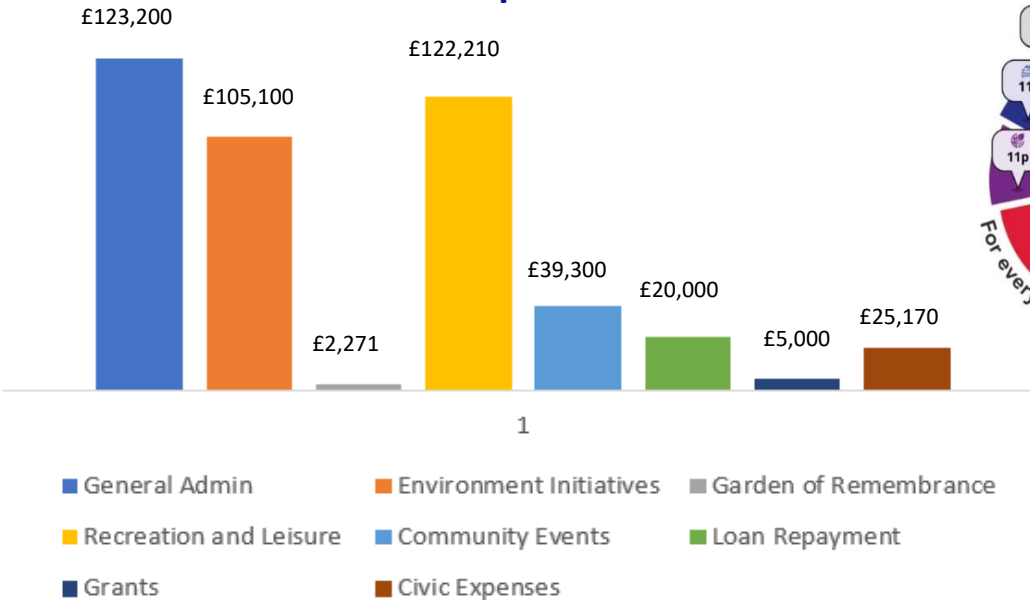
FINANCE & PROJECTS COMMITTEE

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. 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 2023/2024 the Band D Precept has increased by £1.25. The precept for 2023/24 is £442,251

Precept 2023-2024



GRANTS AWARDED

For the financial year ending 31 March 2023 the grants below were awarded under the Town Council's Grants scheme.

In addition to the grants awarded below the Town Council received a £5,000 locality funding grant from Essex County Council and County Councillor Bob Massey is funding the new steps to the sea wall.

SWF Railway Adopters –Talking Bench	£600
Rotary Swimathon Event	£200
Woodham Ferrers Swim Club–Pace Clock and Equipment	£200
Village Hall– New Bowls Matting Stand	50%

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.

CHANGES

A new BACS system has been put in place enabling the council to make faster payments.

New email addresses are being put in place for Councillors, which will allow better, free flowing communication both internally but also with the wider community.

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
Vacancy

COLLINGWOOD WARD

Councillor Peter Ferry
Councillor Scott Wilson
Councillor Malcolm Sismey
Councillor Darren Thompson
Vacancy

WOODVILLE WARD

Councillor Keith Bentley
Councillor Donna Eley
Councillor Ian Roberts
Councillor Toni Perham Lake
Vacancy

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.

SOUTH WOODHAM FERRERS TOWN COUNCIL
CHAMPIONS MANOR HALL
HULLBRIDGE ROAD