



ANNUAL REPORT

2016-17

Wirksworth Town Council

INTRODUCTION

This is my second consecutive year where it has been an honour to represent Wirksworth as the Town Mayor. The Town Council have continued to build on the work in previous years. The small children's play area at Wash Green is now open. We are still actively trying to find a suitable space for allotments in the Town. In the Town Hall we replaced the tired and worn chairs. The Town Council also stepped in to manage the administration of the Well Dressings following the sudden illness of the Well Dressing Coordinator, a role that the Town Council has agreed to continue following her retirement. Finally during the summer we introduced a splash of colour in the Town with a trial of planters, resident feedback was so overwhelmingly positive that we are increasing the scheme for summer 2017. It has been a pleasure working with groups and individuals within this vibrant town.

Cllr Andy Pollock

Mayor of Wirksworth

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How is the Town Council Financed ?:

The majority of the Town Council's money comes from a precept which is added to the Council Tax levy which is collected by Derbyshire Dales District Council. In 2016-17, the precept was £121000 with a further £3000 provided as a phased support grant *.

* In 2013-14, the basis upon which the Town and Parish Council Precepts were calculated was changed by central government.

The calculation is:

$$(\text{no of Band "D" properties in the parish}) \times (\text{tax amount}) = \text{precept}$$

The change occurred to the manner in which *band D properties* was calculated (in 2012 the figure for Band "D" was 1911, and then it was reduced to 1712.72). This change occurred without much warning and would have represented a decrease 8.5% in precept that the Town Council received.

In recognition of the impact of the change to the calculation, Derbyshire Dales District Council introduced a temporary grant, to be grant phased out over 4 years, so each year the Town Council has had to increase its precept request (and the tax amount passed to residents in the parish) to retain the same level of funding.

Effectively, the Town Council had previously held its level of funding since 2013, albeit because of the changes to the calculation (band D) there is an increase in tax amount to residents. In 2016/17 council increased its level of funding by £3000.

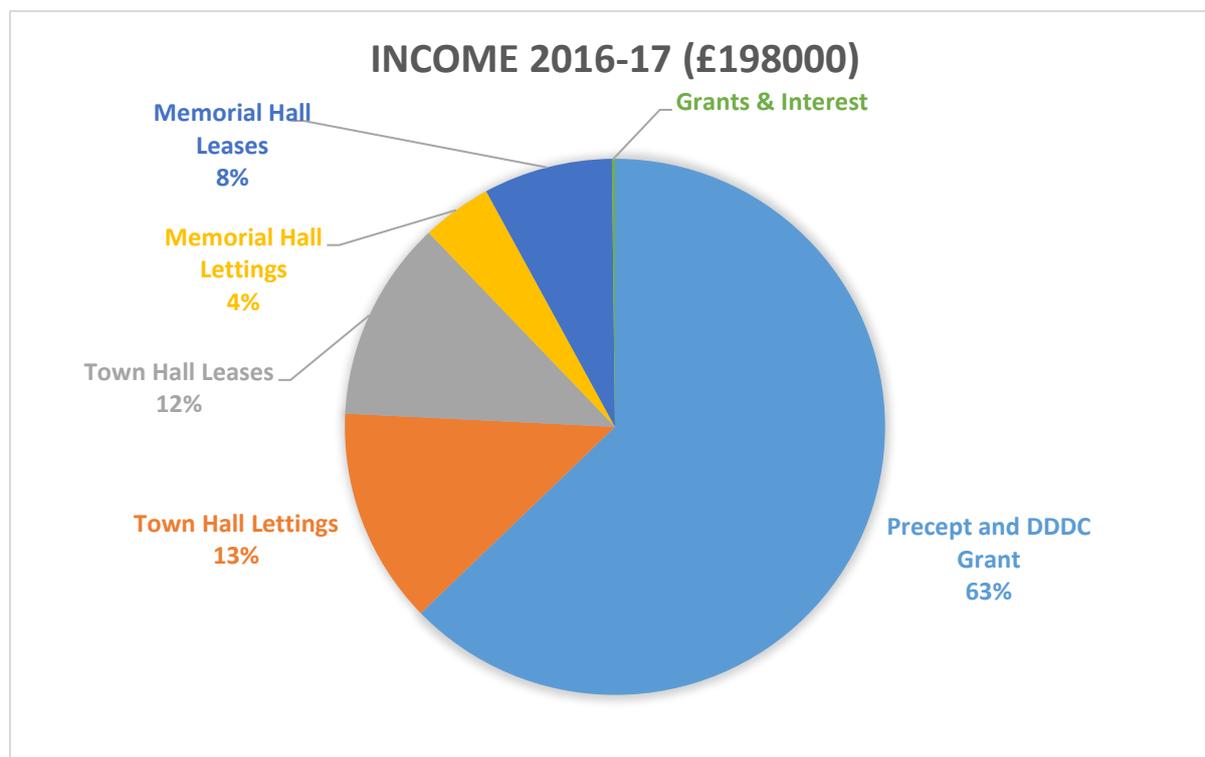
This year, the Town Council has again taken the difficult decision to increase the precept by a further £3000. This represents a real increase in funding level for 2016/17 which will be £127000.

The Precept Request is submitted to District Council by the Town Council, at present there is no facility for a Town or Parish Council to provide any explanation within the correspondence which is sent out with the Council Tax Advice.

The temporary grant from DDDC has now ended, and in 2017-18 the Precept Demand will be the only source of funds other than those income streams that the Town Council generates itself (e.g. Leases)

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Analysis of Income:



The Town Council currently owns two buildings, Stoney Wood, Wash Green Play Area as well other land and assets. A full list of the Town Assets can be found at <http://www.wirksworthtowncouncil.gov.uk/property.html>.

Both the Town Hall and the Memorial are tenanted (leased) as well as some rooms being hired out on an occasional basis "lettings" for used by local residents, groups etc.

The provision of these facilities within the town under both leases and occasional lettings generate additional income for the Town Council, giving a total income of £198000.

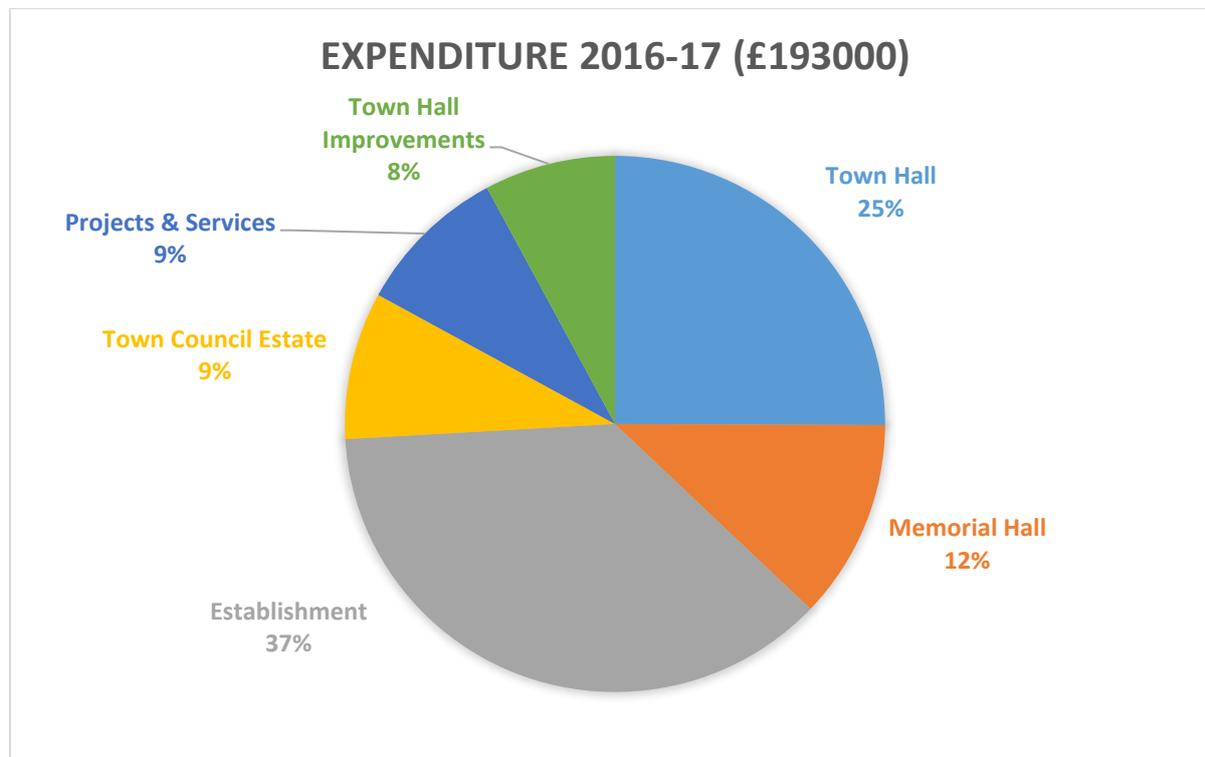
In 2016, cutbacks at Derbyshire County Council lead to the closure of the Wirksworth Surestart office, resulting in a significant reduction in income derived from leasing the Memorial Hall.

The reduction in income generated from leases has been offset in 2016/17 by the funds raised from lettings at the Town Hall/Memorial Hall which have increased (20%/12% resp), this was the 2nd year where the Town Council had dedicated clerical support for buildings and reflects a far higher utilisation of the building. The increase in lettings at the Memorial Hall is also in part due to the return of the building to the Town Council from Surestart, which enables lettings to be made during the day time in the week.

The Town Council undertook a rental review of all it leasehold properties in November 2016. The Town Council has chosen not to increase the rent on the Library to the recommended market rate. This represents a subsidy of £4000 towards the provision of a library service in Wirksworth (provided by Derbyshire County Council).

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Analysis of Expenditure:



Town Hall & Memorial Hall

This includes regular maintenance, including caretaking staff, utilities and consumables costs incurred at each site.

Establishment

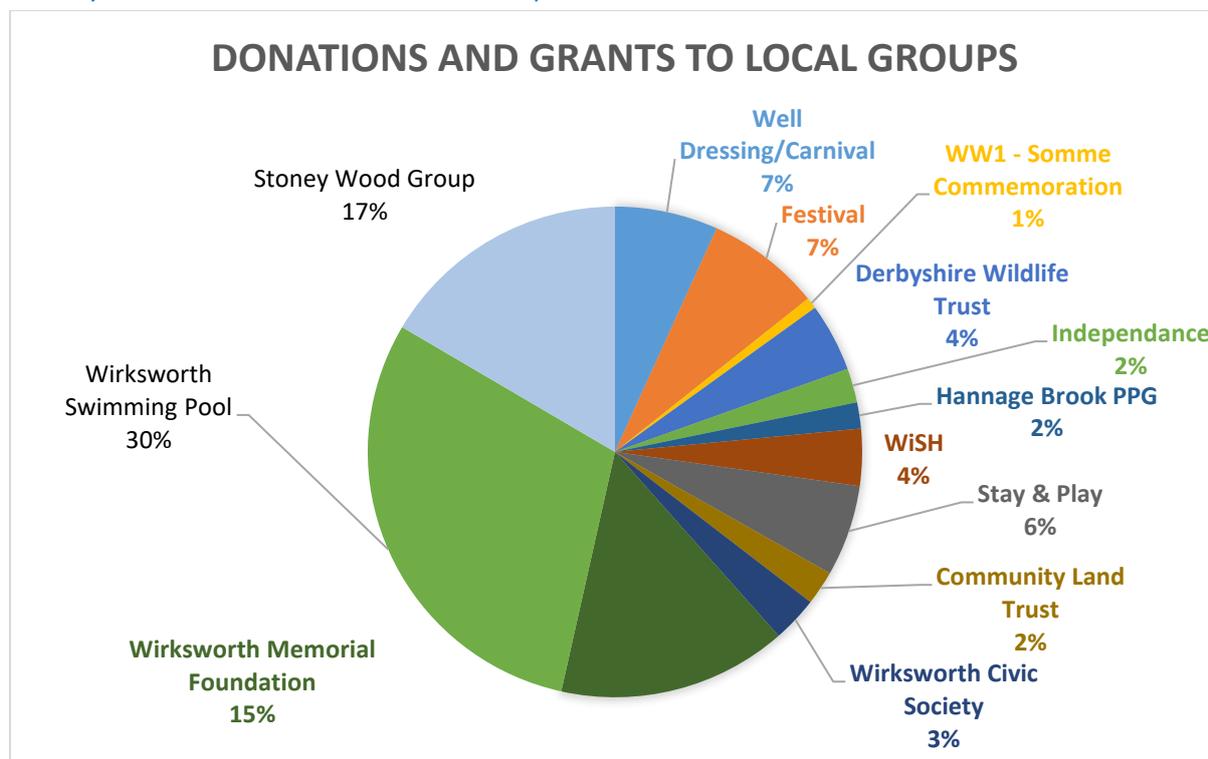
This includes office staff cost and associated infrastructure such as telecoms as well as training for all staff/ councillors and other civic costs such as the By Election to. The office staff manage all the assets of the Town Council, operate the booking system, as well as provide advice and guidance to Councillor and residents.

Projects & Services

This includes a wide range of “other” items which don’t fall neatly within other categories, and includes: Donations and support for community groups, Grit Bins/ Bus Shelters/Footpaths and Town Promotion.

Donations and support for other groups is analysed further on the next page.

Analysis of Donation and Groups:



Each year, the Town Council allocates a fund (£3500 in 2016/17) to provide small grants to local groups. In addition to the small grant scheme, the Town Council also provides more substantial support to specific groups and projects (£10100 in 2016/17).

Any group wishing to access the small grant scheme can apply using a community grant scheme application form which is available from the Town Council office.

Groups that benefited from grants included the Wirksworth Stay and Play Group who approached the council for support to continue following the closure of Wirksworth Surestart office by Derbyshire County Council.

Wirksworth Town Council is also the largest single sponsor to the two major events in the Town Calendar - Wirksworth Parade and Wirksworth Festival

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Town Council General Information:

Mayor and Chairman 2016-17:

CLlr Andy Pollock

Deputy Mayor:

CLlr Alison Clamp

Town Clerk: **Paul Jennings**

Wirksworth Town Council is the most local level of Government, with 11 Town Councillors, and 2 office and 4 caretaking part-time staff who are employed to guide and support the delivery of the council's activities:

The Town Councillors are volunteers who give their time freely and do not receive any remuneration. The Chair of the Council as Mayor does receive a small allowance to help with costs incurred undertaking this important civic role.

Your Councillors:

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