



ANNUAL REPORT

2015-16

Wirksworth Town Council

INTRODUCTION

It has been an honour to represent Wirksworth as the Town Mayor. In the past year, we have undertaken much of the work necessary to provide a dedicated children's play area at Wash Green. We are committed to improving communication and have taken the first steps in embracing social media by establishing a Facebook page. We have consulted with residents regarding the provision of Allotments and are now trying to find a location in the town (if you know of a suitable piece of land please let us know !). We have also begun negotiation with Derbyshire Dales District Council to acquire a number of small parcels of land to provide community gardens at Gorsey Bank, to help tackle the storage of bins on Church Walk and to adopt the disused toilet block on Fanny Shaw. Finally, we have completed many of the improvement works to the Town Hall. A highlight for me this year was the combined event by Twinning and Stoney Wood Group when we welcomed visitors from our Twinned Towns of Die and Frankenau at the 20th Anniversary celebration in Stoney Wood. 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 2015-16, the precept was £115000 with a further £6000 provided as 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.

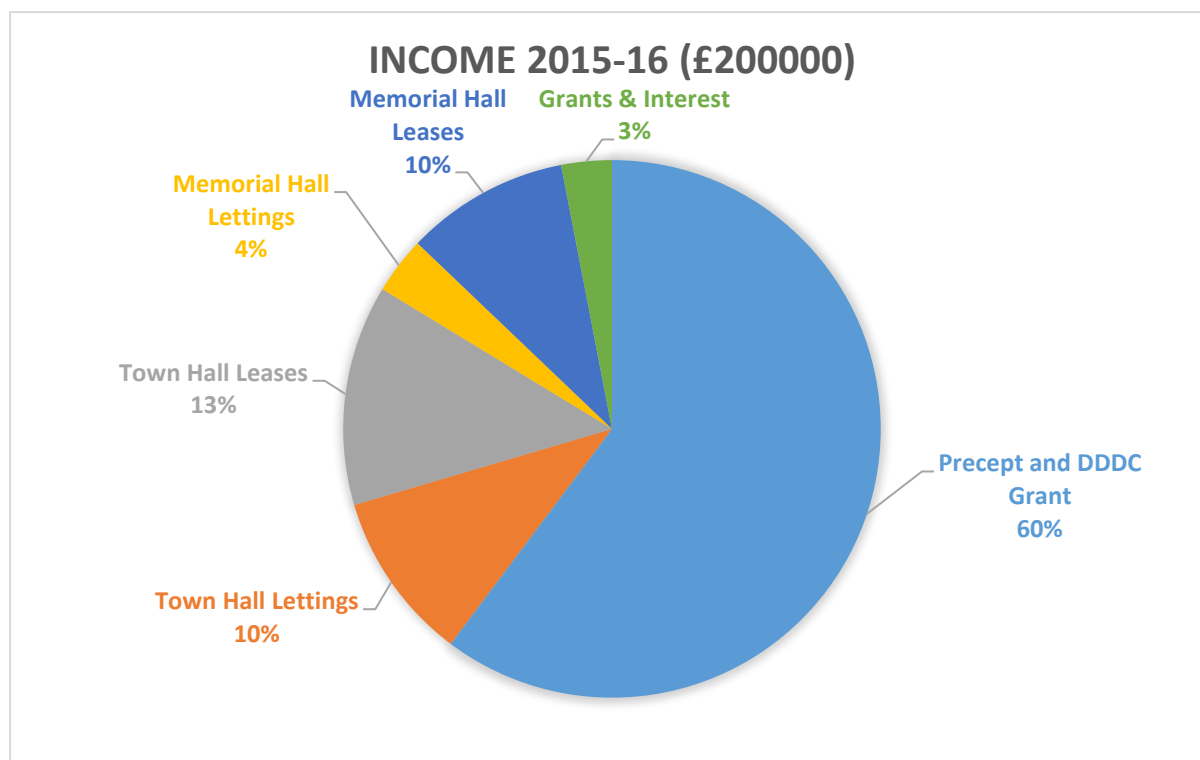
Effectively, the Town Council has held its level of funding since 2013, albeit because of the changes to the calculation (band D) there is an increase in tax amount to residents. This approach has been used across the country by many town and parish councils.

This year, the Town Council has 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 £124000 { from 2012 onwards the Town Council has held its funding level at £121000}.

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.

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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 (leases) as well as being hired out on an occasional basis "lettings" for used by local residents, groups etc.

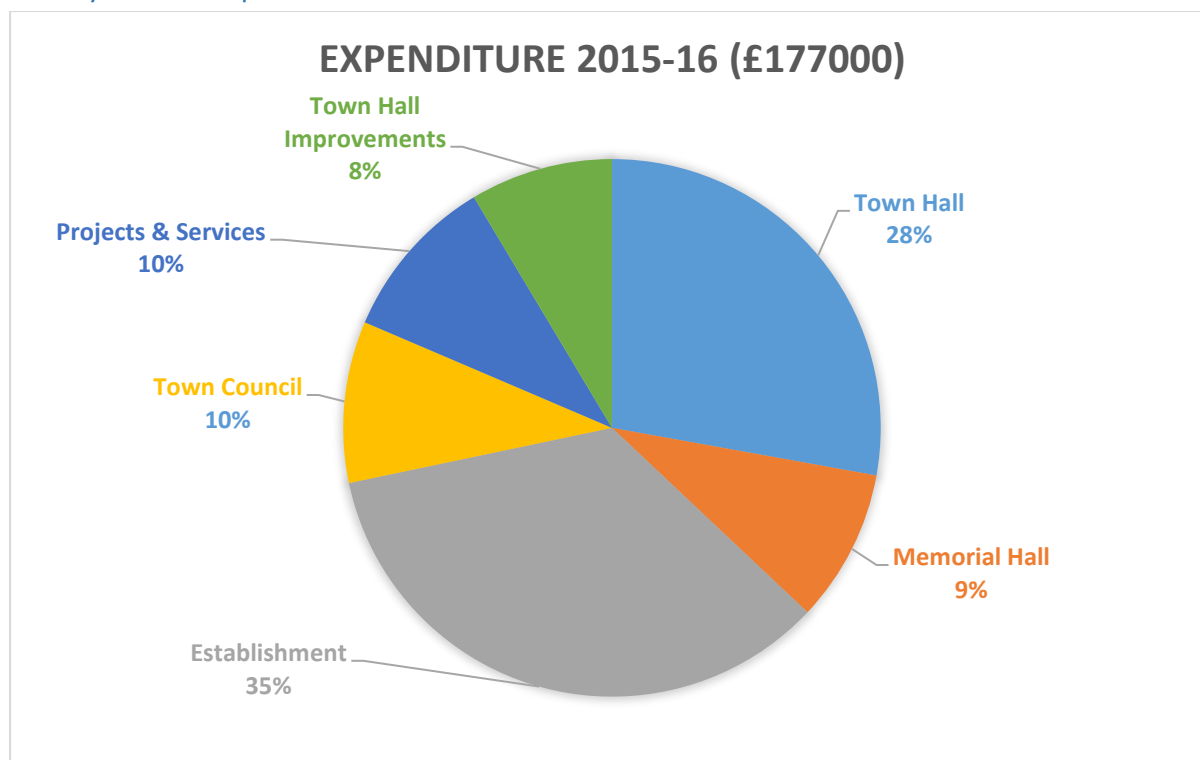
The provision of these facilities within the town under both leases and occasional lettings generate additional income for the Town Council, giving a total income of £200000.

In 2015/16 the funds raised from lettings at the Town Hall increased by (12%), this was the first whole year where the Town Council had dedicated clerical support to lettings and also coincides with the completion of much of the significant improvement works to the fabric and facilities within the Town Hall.

In the same period there was also an increase in Lettings (22%) at the Memorial Hall which may also be due to a more proactive approach encouraging the use of this facility.

The Town Council also received grants from Dales Housing and Wirksworth Memorial Foundation to help towards the costs of creating a play area at Wash Green.

Analysis of Expenditure:



Town Hall & Memorial Hall

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

Establishment

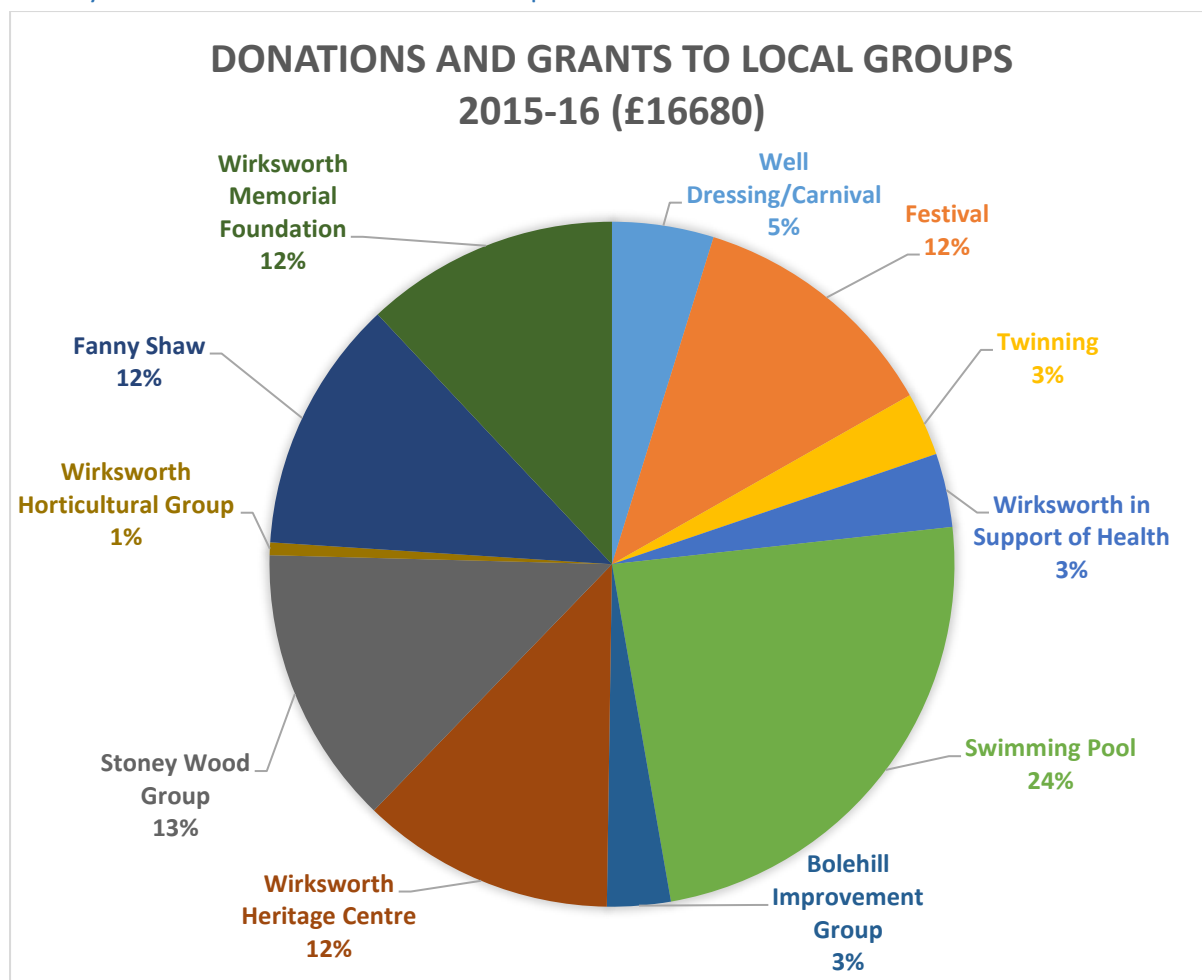
This includes office staff cost and associated infrastructure such as telecoms as well as training for all staff/ councillors and other civic costs such as the Election. The office staff manage all the assets of the Town Council, operate the booking system, as well as provide advice and guidance to Councillor 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 2015/16) 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 (£13500 in 2015/16).

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.

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Town Council General Information:

Mayor and Chairman 2015-16:

Clr Andy Pollock

Deputy Mayor:

Clr Ben Dew



(resigned as a councillor w/e 21st March 2016)

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:

Alison Clamp 01629 823870 aliclampy@yahoo.com		Mike Edwards 01629 822198 mgedwards1031@btinternet.com	
Gladwyn Gratton 01629 822742 gladwyn@grattonnet.co.uk		Steve Maskrey 07786 073735 stephen.maskrey@btinternet.com	
Andy Jordan 01629 824396 andrew.jordan@btinternet.com		Andy Pollock 01629 823752 neverlanders@btinternet.com	
Josh Stockell 07989 627307 joshstockell@hotmail.com		Pam Taylor 01629 824457 pamtaylor54@gmail.com	
Chris Whittall 01629 822648 CRWhittall@aol.com		Jo Williams 01629 259168 sangiki@hotmail.co.uk	
Vacancy to be filled by election 26/5/16			