

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2003

Your Elected Representatives:

Cllr. D. Craze (Town Mayor)	Cllr. C. P. Liddy	Cllr. Mrs. M. Hignell
Cllr. Mrs. G. Primrose (Deputy Mayor)	Cllr. S. Ford	Cllr. P. M. Hill
Cllr. Mrs. J. H. Richardson	Cllr. Mrs. P. Gaster	Cllr. C. Thompson
	Cllr. S. R. Davies	Cllr. M. Jarvis

During 2002/2003 the representatives of Wivenhoe on the Colchester Borough Council have been:

For Wivenhoe Quay ward:	Cllr. S. R. Davies Cllr. R. Newman
For Wivenhoe Cross ward:	Cllr. D. Adams Cllr. P. Hawkins

Cllr. Julie Young represents Wivenhoe on Essex County Council.

Wivenhoe Council Staff:

The Council staff during 2002-2003 were: Antoinette Illsley, Town Clerk, who married in October and is now Mrs. Stinson; Susannah Bradley, Assistant Town Clerk; maintenance staff, Brian Skeet and James Young; Hall Caretaker, Mick Wells; Litter-picker, Ray Smith.

2002 - 2003

A YEAR END REVIEW:

The Queen's Golden Jubilee celebrations in early June began the year in a festive way. Wivenhoe Town Council played its part in ensuring that residents were able to enjoy a Picnic in the Park with two lots of fireworks and a variety of musical entertainment, the highlight of the evening being Queen B, a tribute band.

In October, a plaque to mark 200 years of shipbuilding at Wivenhoe was unveiled by the Town Mayor in the dry dock on the new riverside development, formerly the location of one of Wivenhoe's two shipyards.

The Chief Executive of Colchester Borough Council, Mrs. Andrea Hill, met Town Councillors to hear their concerns on the need for new facilities to cope with Wivenhoe's rapidly-expanding population.

King George V Field and Play Area:

The May Fair, Picnic in the Park, and Teddy Bears' Picnic have been examples of the use this valuable area has enjoyed in the last year, providing fun for all age groups. Football areas, maintained by the Town Council workforce, have provided informal fun for many young people. However, there is a downside to this vital amenity in the vandalism that goes on here. Wivenhoe Town Council's outdoor workmen spend many hours clearing litter and broken glass from the grass.

During the past year the path has been coated with tarmac, providing a more comfortable surface for people to walk on, including those people going to and from the rail station.

The William Loveless Hall:

The closure of many classes at the Phillip Road Education Centre last September, which caused Councillors considerable concern because of the lack of notice given, has brought a rise on weekly classes being held in the William Loveless Hall. During the week there is a chance to participate in yoga, patchwork and quilting, bridge, ballroom dancing, tai chi, keep fit, line dancing, slimming and badminton, and to take your child to the clinic or classes in music, art or dancing. The annual Pantomime, Players and Gilbert & Sullivan productions have all taken place in the past year. At other times the Hall is available for private functions. Wedding receptions, christening and birthday parties, workshops, fashion shows, art exhibitions, quiz nights and concerts are some of the functions. To book your event or just to discuss the possibility, talk to Susannah Bradley on the Council's number (822864) during the working week.

Planning Report:

The Town Council acts in an advisory capacity on all planning applications in Wivenhoe, and over the past year has achieved considerable success in promoting the needs and requests of the Town in many planning matters. There is on-going discussion relating to the Cook's Shipyard site, and the Town Council, working with other Wivenhoe pressure groups, has taken a leading role in the wording of the Section 106 Agreement, which sets the terms and conditions to which the developer must adhere. In addition, the Town Council has successfully negotiated a 999-year lease with the developer for a Fishermen's store, the wet dock, slipway, car park, dinghy park and a public toilet. There has been considerable progress made with the Engine Shed Project, which will not only be a great asset for Wivenhoe, but also for the whole Colchester and Tendring catchment area. Councillors were also pleased to note that, following discussion with the Town Council, the land adjacent to Redland Lafarge was designated as a country park in the Colchester Plan. In all, the Town Council's Planning Committee has considered and submitted recommendations on 103 planning applications this year at a total of 16 meetings.

Community Policing:

P.C. Tracey Greenwood, our dedicated police officer became P.C. Tracey Allen on the occasion of her marriage during the summer. She carries out her duties to the best of her ability, dealing with requests when she is able, but is required on a regular basis to carry out duties elsewhere, thus reducing the police cover that was promised to us. She was able, fortunately, to take immediate action concerning speeding traffic in The Avenue, and Rectory Road. In The Avenue, a total of 17,752 vehicles were recorded in the period 16th July to 18th July inclusive, an average of 5,917 per day. The 85th percentile (the speed at which 85% of the vehicles were travelling within) was 33.54mph. In Rectory Road from 15th July to 17th July inclusive, 11,176 vehicles were recorded, an average of 3,725 per day. Here, the 85th percentile was 34.09mph. P.C. Greenwood issued some speeding tickets herself.

The Wivenhoe Community Safety Group:

The armed robbery on the Post Office was a setback to the aims of this group which involve Councillors to provide the community with the safest town in the U.K. (Population ratio statistics.) However, the group is constantly active and meets regularly to tackle issues of

community safety and anti-social behaviour. It is pleasant to report that complaints of anti-social behaviour and other criminal activity have been reduced.

There has been a reduction in the number of youths found under the influence of drugs and alcohol. They continue to be advised on the dangers of taking illegal drugs. Youths are consulted regularly on their concerns, and when consulted they have provided constructive views. Their main request continues to be the provision of a skateboard park. Other requests include a 'cycle activity' area and a safe venue for the use of trial motorcycles. Wivenhoe Town Council has already acted on their request for football pitch lines on the KGV, which was met with considerable appreciation by the youths.

There are other agencies that have been involved during the year and their advice and assistance has been welcomed.

Landscaping Committee:

The Town Council will this year revitalise the tubs and boats around the town. Sponsorship for this comes from businesses, organisations and individuals, many of whom continue to donate, year after year, the money needed to make the scheme work. Anyone wishing to donate should contact the Town Council offices.

The Council's workforce continues to maintain with repairs and varnishing the town's wooden seats, and has repainted all the bus shelters in Wivenhoe during the past year.

Christmas Lights:

The hardworking team of volunteers whose efforts achieved the dazzling effects seen throughout the town last Christmas once again deserve our heartiest congratulations. Headed by Cllr. Mrs. Mary Hignell and Mr. David Sleightholm, who in particular worked on preparation for the lights during the whole year, they once again provided a spectacular display.

The Quay

The Quay Shelter project has been completed and was opened by the Mayor in October.

Residents have enjoyed sitting in this, with its view along the Quay and down river.

Wivenhoe Town Council is grateful to the Borough Council for financing this, and to Town and Borough Councillor Richard Davies for overseeing the project as Clerk of Works.

Wivenhoe Woods:

Wivenhoe Town Council has created a working party to liaise with Colchester Borough Council's Park Ranger team to control work in the woods. It is comprised of both Town Councillors and lay people, with a Town Councillor as Chairman, and is scheduled to meet regularly to review the work programme for work in the wood, bearing in mind the views of local residents.

This working party will also concern itself with the new Colne Nature reserve, established by Colchester Borough Council in 2002. It will encourage conservation work and give Wivenhoe people the chance to express their feelings on the management plans of the Borough Council concerning these areas.

Broad Lane Sports Ground:

The four tennis courts are available for use by the publication a 'Pay and Play' basis - booking is done at the time of play, and costs £4.00 per hour (£1.50 if all players are under 16.) There is also a £5.00 returnable key deposit. The courts are being well-used by

Wivenhoe Tennis Club, who are keen to recruit new members. The Tennis Academy provides coaching for novice juniors and adults. Three of the trustees are Town Councillors. Wivenhoe Youth Football Club has new changing-rooms, which were opened by the Mayor in July.

Allotments:

Wivenhoe's allotments are now listed on the computer, with sizes and prices worked out in readiness for the annual bills. Even so, the Town Council office needs to know when an allotment-holder becomes of pensionable age, in order to adjust the rate - so, plot-holders, don't forget to let them know when you have that all-important birthday!

Best Value:

The remit of this committee is to consider the functions and roles of councillors, and the division of responsibilities between them in the various committees and working parties. It is also to reflect on the relationship between the Town Council and other local authorities (especially Colchester Borough and Essex County Councils), and local organisations, both private and voluntary, whose activities affect Wivenhoe. Finally, it is to consider whether the Town Council fulfils its duties and obligations to the Town in the best way possible, comparing its performance with those of similar parishes and town councils. To fulfil this remit, the Committee meets four times a year, to discuss in detail the position to date, and to plan any future changes, in order that Best Value be achieved.

Street Cleaning:

Wivenhoe Town Council is concerned to keep Wivenhoe's streets as clean as possible. Following pressure from Wivenhoe Town Council, the Borough Council's level of service has improved. The Town Council also employs a litter-picker to keep Wivenhoe as tidy as possible.

Communication With Wivenhoe:

Town Councillor Peter Hill has put a lot of hard work into the Wivenhoe Encyclopaedia website over the past year with resounding success. Its domain name is: www.wivenhoe.gov.uk. Praise for the site has come in from all around the globe. By visiting it you can learn about local businesses and organisations, Wivenhoe's history, recent events and forthcoming ones too. Town Council minutes are also now published on the website. Broadband, giving faster access to the Internet, has recently arrived in Wivenhoe, through the efforts of Bernard Horan, a local resident, and Wivenhoe Town Council, who encouraged people to lobby for an upgrade of the local exchange. To find out more about this BT service go to www.bt.com/broadband.

The 'Community' Bus:

Wivenhoe's Community Bus continues to provide a valuable service to the community. The Town Council financially helps with the maintenance costs of the bus and office staff keep the bookings diary. The Town Council would like to take this opportunity of thanking all the volunteer drivers who give up their time to taking take the elderly to the Monday Club, the Day Centre, or the Over-60s Club.

The bus is available for use by the public when it is not being used by these groups. Rates of suggested donations are reasonable and a short familiarisation process enables the holder of a clean licence to drive it.

Sadly, the 'Community' Bus Committee's Chairman, Bob Richardson, died in April. The bus went to his funeral, acting as part of the cortege. Bob was a splendid Chairman and his wisdom and common sense is already being missed in the day-to-day running of the bus.

Donations to the 'Community' Bus in his memory have been made by many, in preparation for the day when we have to buy a new bus. If you would like to make such a donation in Bob's memory, please do so at Wivenhoe Town Council offices, making any cheques payable to W.T.C. Minibus Account.

Finance:

The Town Council's precept for 2003/2004 has been set at £97,266, an increase of 3.55% on 2002/2003. This represents a rate of £37.53 per Council tax payer. Income from fees and charges is estimated at £18,784 with £31,043 coming from the Parish Grant and an estimated £64,132 from carried-forward balances, giving a total planned expenditure for the year of £211,255.

Mayor's Charity Fund:

Cllr. Stephen Ford's year as Mayor of Wivenhoe ended with the distribution of the funds raised for the Mayor's Charity during his year. The total of £3,100 was divided between the Wivenhoe and District Sporting Facilities Trust, the Wivenhoe Ferry Trust, the Community Bus, Wivenhoe Scouts & Guides, the Over-60s Club, St. John Ambulance, Wivenhoe Youth Theatre, Britannia Court Residents' Association, Wivenhoe Day Centre, Stuart Pawsey Support Group and the Wivenhoe Players.

This money was raised by many people at an assortment of functions which included an exhibition of photographs of old Wivenhoe, the Teddy Bears' Picnic, a cricket match, darts matches, a 'Space' night, a tea dance, the Mayor's Ball, and a day trip to France on a Cedrics' coach.

Town Council Public Access:

All Town Council meetings are advertised on the notice board outside the Council Offices. Members of the public are welcome to attend. Should members of the public wish to speak at the Town Council meetings, a request must be made via the Town Clerk, Mrs. Antoinette Stinson, two working days in advance of the meeting.

The Planning Committee meets every three weeks. It considers local planning applications as well as other development issues. Members of the public are welcome to attend.

The Council Offices are located at 77 High Street, on the first floor, and are open from 10.00am to 4.00pm from Monday to Friday, with a break for lunch.

The telephone number of the offices is 01206 822864, fax number 01206 827298, e-mail wivenhoe_enquiries@talk21.com. The website is www.wivenhoe.gov.uk

NOTICE OF COMPLETION OF AUDIT

(Local Government Finance Act 1982 and Accounts and Audit Regulations 1996 & Local Government Act 1999 and the Audit Commission Act 1998.)

Notice is hereby given that the Audit procedures for year ending 31 March 2002 took place in May 2002 in accordance with the Audit Commission's new regulations.

Antoinette Stinson, Town Clerk