



**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**APRIL 2023 - MARCH 2024**

**Approved at a meeting of Council on Monday 10 June 2024**

## FOREWORD BY THE CHAIRMAN

I have had the privilege and pleasure of being the Chairman of Wingham Parish Council for five years and I am pleased to report that the Council has continued to be very actively engaged with the community during the last year. This year's Annual Report sets out a precis of activities undertaken.

*Cllr S Addis, Chairman*

**MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL** At the Annual Meeting of the Council in May 2023 Cllr Addis was re-elected as Chairman with Cllr Graydon re-elected as Vice-Chairman. Cllrs Brice, Collins, Graydon & Harvey were elected as members of the Planning Committee. Offices for various roles including: Internal Financial Control, Internal Audit, Maintenance checks, Property checks, Allotment checks, Highways, Speed Indicator Device (SID) stats, Speedwatch, Training, Environment and GDPR were filled by Councillors. Representatives for village organisations were agreed as were resident volunteer roles.

Throughout the year, members of the Council furthered the interests of the Wingham community at meetings of the Dover District Towns and Parishes, KCC Highways, the Kent Association of Local Councils, the A257 Traffic Group and other local organisations. Conferences, workshops and training were also attended by Councillors and the clerk. Cllr Baker was the Training Rep and responsible for Allotment checks. Cllr Brice represented the council on the Village Hall Management Committee and was responsible for GDPR. Cllr Collins chaired the Planning Committee. Cllr Cook was co-opted at the July meeting and continued to help with SID maintenance. Cllr Graydon carried out property checks and defibrillator maintenance and was responsible for Highways. Cllr Harvey carried out his role of Internal Finance Control Officer and was responsible for Play Area checks. Cllr Smith was responsible for the Environment/Sustainability and represented the Council on the Recreation Ground Management Committee. Cllr Young was responsible for Speedwatch, SID statistics and Internal Audit.

**VOLUNTEERS:** Our Tree Warden, Martin Smith, kept a watchful eye on all parish trees; Bryan Curtis, A257 Group representative, continued to chair A257 meetings and as Flag Warden, changed flags as required throughout the year; the Wingham Footpath Group acted collectively as the Footpath Warden and walked the 30 footpaths crossing our Parish; and various residents helped tidy parish garden areas.

**MEETINGS** Parish Council meetings were held every month, except for August. A public session was held at each meeting to enable questions from residents. In addition, an extraordinary meeting was held on 11 May to discuss a planning application, and a public budget meeting was incorporated into the November Council meeting. The Annual Parish Assembly was held on 19 April 2023. Following the Chairman's annual report, our District Councillor, Mike Conolly, announced he would be standing down at the May elections after 15 years, noting it had been a privilege to serve residents in his ward. All Councillor and village organisation annual reports were supplied in a report pack and made available on the council's website. The Community Awards were presented to Karen Kelderis (Jack Jolly Award) and Peter Prebble (KALC Community Award). This was followed by the election of village representatives to the Recreation Ground Management Committee and then presentations on "The Health & Wellbeing in the Wingham Community" by Cllr Lou Peckham giving results of the council's survey, followed by Elliot Allen from DDC providing feedback and useful information relating to themes arising from the survey.

**ACHIEVEMENTS** There were no major projects during 2023/24, but progress is being made with the proposed new Parish Council office at the Village Hall, including the commission of architect drawings.

**LAND, CAPITAL AND PROPERTY** In addition to Elgars Field and the Recreation Ground, both owned by the Parish Council, the Council continued to arrange for the grass to be cut at Wingham Green and the Wingham Remembrance Garden. Red Lion corner garden, the Perennial Garden, the Remembrance Garden, High Street roses and the Commemorative Planter were tidied by volunteers with plants, both donated and purchased, added to garden areas. Tree maintenance, felling and pruning were carried out at Elgars Field and the Remembrance Garden. Mulch was donated for Recreation Ground trees and spread by volunteers. During the year maintenance for the WCs in St Mary's Meadow was paid to DDC and an enhanced access portable toilet was hired for use by visitors to the Recreation Ground. Maintenance of street furniture was carried out as required and the defibrillator was serviced, had parts replaced, new batteries and the kiosk lighting replaced. A metal bollard was installed at the Elgars Field entrance and water supplied for the allotment holders. A new Union flag, plus new halyard and base cover for the flagpole was purchased and 5 pavement parking signs commissioned. A new laptop for the clerk was supplied and council newsletter inserts included with the Wingham Community Newsletter. Compostable bags for the dog waste bag dispensing stations were purchased and monthly line rental and maintenance for the CCTV at the Recreation Ground paid. The annual inspection of the Play Area, MUGA and outdoor gym was carried out by Playdale Playgrounds and the zipwire serviced on their recommendation. IT support was maintained by HIBITs and Zoom membership renewed to carry out virtual meetings.

**COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES** Members of the Parish Council took part in the Remembrance Day Parade and Service on 12 November, during which the Chairman laid a wreath at the war memorial. The musical accompaniment for the High Street Christmas Community Carols on 14 December was supplied by a band of local melodion, accordion and fiddle players. Children from Wingham Primary School took part in the Welcome to Wingham poster competition, and a community litter pick took place on 16 March 2024.

**FINANCE** Councillors responsible for Internal Audit, our clerk and the Independent Internal Auditor all helped to ensure that the official external Annual Audit found our accounts to be in accordance with proper practice. Community grants and small capital grants were awarded to various village organisations, including: The Recreation Ground Committee, See-Saw Pre-School, Village Hall Management Committee, Parochial Church Council for maintenance of the burial ground, Scouts, Football club and Wingham Community News. A donation was made to the RBL Poppy Appeal for the Remembrance Wreath and to the Dover District Beekeeper Association to support their management of Asian hornets.

All Members of the Council declined to take the Councillors' Basic Allowance.

The Independent Internal Auditor of Accounts report for the 2023/24 Annual Return carried out in May 2024 stated that the Finance and Accounts for the year ending March 2024 showed "...a fair, reasonable and true representation. Wingham Parish Council has put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources."

The public budget meeting incorporated into the November 2023 meeting failed to attract any attendees.

**THANK YOU** The Parish Council has limited resources both financially and in terms of workforce. We would not be able to achieve as much as we do without the support and work of the residents and businesses of Wingham. Working together means we have a vibrant community. Thank you to all those who have given their time, knowledge, and resources to contribute to this.

**SUMMARY OF PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS 2023/2024**

<b>RECEIPTS</b>	<b>£</b>
Balance in hand at 1 April 2023 including earmarked funds at 31.3.23	90379
Precept	54081
Interest on savings account	687
VAT Refund 2022-23	2203
Allotment Rents	253
Recreation Ground Rent	1
Grants	0
Miscellaneous (Donations/refund/errors)	209
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>147813</b>

<b>Administration (detail)</b>	<b>£</b>
Clerk salary, pension, NI, tax & WFH allowance	15722
Annual subscriptions	959
Insurance	2880
Audit	478
Office supplies + IT costs	2562
Post and telephone	581
Hire of Village Hall	264
Water for allotments	78
ICO Registration	40
Election costs	186
Publishing (newsletter insert)	400
Reference books	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24150</b>

<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>£</b>
Administration (as detailed above)	24150
Grants to village organisations	8874
Land maintenance	3502
Property maintenance (inc WCs)	13559
Councillor's allowances	0
Chairman's allowance	59
Training and conferences	373
Trees and verges	1170
Capital expenditure	4192
Contingencies & Section 137	394
Miscellaneous & Projects (new office)	665
NB. These totals include £2442 VAT to be reclaimed	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>56938</b>

<b>Earmarked Funds at 31.3.24</b>	<b>£</b>
Community Event Fund	1500
Election Fund	2293
Health & Wellbeing Fund	10000
IT Fund	2203
Partnership Funding	9068
Play Area	17458
Reserves	33741
Village Organisations	0
New Office Fund	13350
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>89613</b>

<b>END OF YEAR BALANCE</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>90875</b>
(total receipts minus total expenditure)		

NB. This total includes the earmarked funds noted above