



FARNHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Report to the Annual Town Meeting of Electors

Thursday 26 March 2015

Council

Farnham Town Council has 18 elected councillors who represent nine wards and a total population of around 40,000 people.

From 2011- 2015 the composition of Farnham Town Council has been: 16 Conservatives, 1 Independent, and 1 Liberal Democrat. Elections take place on 7 May to elect a new Council from 2015-2019.

Farnham Town Council meets as a Full Council nine times a year and it is at these meetings that decisions are taken. Meetings are open to the public and, as part of each agenda, there is an opportunity for public questions on any matter.



The day-to-day work of the Council is undertaken through a number of working groups. These groups discuss the detail of projects and formulate future plans. Recommendations of meetings go to Full Council for final decision.

Farnham Town Council's working groups are:

- Strategy and Finance with its sub groups :
 - Infrastructure Planning Task Group
 - HR Panel
 - Offices Task Group
 - Health Task Group (met once in 2014/15)
- Cemeteries and Appeals
- Community Enhancement, with a Community Group advisory
- Planning & Licensing Consultative Group
- Tourism and Events



The Mayor of Farnham 2014/15

Full Council meetings are chaired by the Mayor of Farnham. The Mayor for 2014/15 is Councillor Jeremy Ricketts. The Mayor represents the town at civic and ceremonial functions. During the mayoral year, the Mayor will attend over 300 community events. The new Mayor for 2015/16 will be elected on 21 May 2015.

The official Mayoral charity for 2014/15 is Post 19 which is an organisation that provides services for young adults with learning difficulties. Post 19 builds on their existing skills and interests so they can achieve a sense of belonging in their community.

Services

Farnham Town Council provides many services for its residents including graffiti removal, providing allotments, cemeteries and funding CCTV as well as a year-long calendar of events. During 2015/16 and based on an average Band D property, each household will pay £57.60 to Farnham Town Council. This helps to fund services with the balance of the budget funded by income from services, events and sponsorship.

Farnham Town Council's services include:

- Allotments
- Annual Town Meeting of electors
- CCTV and community safety
- Christmas lights
- Civic events
- Cemeteries
- Community enhancement including:
 - Farnham in Bloom
 - Noticeboards
 - Street furniture
- Farmers' Markets
- Graffiti removal
- Grants for community organisations
- Planning – statutory consultee
- Managing the South Street Trust
- Managing bookings for street banners above the highway
- Toilets
- Tourism and events
- Town Partnerships /twinning with Andernach (Germany), Woodland Park (USA) and other friendships
- War memorials



*Presenting prizes at
Farnham Sports Awards 2014*



A look back over 2014/15

Community enhancement

Graffiti removal

We work hard to ensure the town is kept free of graffiti. Our outside workforce removes what they can and once a month we employ a contractor to deal with the graffiti that requires specialist cleaning.

Private businesses are responsible for the cleaning of graffiti on their properties; however the Town Council may be able to undertake or assist local businesses for a small charge to cover the associated costs.

Before graffiti is removed the 'tags' are photographed to help the police to identify and deal with culprits. After two relatively graffiti-free years, there has been a spate of graffiti at the beginning of 2015.



Christmas lights

The switching on of the town's new Christmas lights marked the start of Farnham's seasonal celebrations. The lighting scheme was extended from the town to Farnham railway station.



Icicle lights lined South Street and a cross-street lighting scheme illuminated West Street, Downing Street, South Street and East Street. A festive Christmas tree took pride of place in The Woolmead and, in partnership with Skanska, a special scheme was designed for the street lights in Castle Street. New

lights were installed in Gostrey Meadow.

For the second year running, we invited the villages to suggest suitable trees or structures for illumination. New schemes for this year included the installation of lights on the yew tree in the church yard at Badshot Lea and Rowledge Village Hall.

Wrecclesham Community Centre

Wrecclesham Community Centre was officially opened in May 2014 following a complete refurbishment that cost nearly £200,000. The Centre now has a new, pitched roof; an extension to the main hall which provided much needed and spacious storage area; durable flooring; modern toilet facilities; advanced security systems and furniture which can cater for the various needs of the many users. The final touches of the refurbishment included the redecoration of the entire Centre.



Farnham in Bloom

A year-round effort from Farnham Town Council and unstinting commitment from volunteers, schools and community groups saw Farnham town centre scoop gold for the fourth year running in **South and South East in Bloom**. Farnham was also crowned overall gold winner for the Large Town category. Other notable achievements were that Gostrey Meadow and The Victoria Garden walked away with Gold and the Victoria Garden received outstanding, which is the highest award possible in the Champion of Champions, It's Your Neighbourhood category. Gold awards were also achieved by the Abbey School and Badshot Lea Infant School, which won the accolade of the best school in Surrey award.



Farnham achieved silver gilt at the 50th **Britain in Bloom** final. The town was invited to represent the southeast in the Large Town category and was one of just 71 finalists out of nearly 4,000 In Bloom groups.

50 YEARS
RHS BRITAIN IN BLOOM
Silver Gilt Medal 2014



Royal Horticultural Society
Sharing the best in Gardening

Flooding

A flood planning workshop was organised by Farnham Town Council in conjunction with the Farnham River Management Committee and relevant agencies and organisations to help residents prepare for future flood incidents.

Wall of famous people

Plaques were unveiled on Farnham's wall of famous people, outside Sainsbury's in South Street, adding the artists Henry Hammond MBE and Arthur Hackney for their contribution to creative arts in Farnham.

A first class makeover



An unattractive electricity substation building in Gostrey Meadow underwent a creative transformation. The broken windows of the red brick substation have been covered with a vinyl that has been illustrated to show the inside of a potting shed complete with a friendly black and white cat that sits on the windowsill watching the children play!

The area around Farnham's railway station was spruced up thanks to the efforts of volunteers from the Farnham in Bloom community group and staff from Farnham Town Council.



The group was helped by PDG Contractors who donated a morning's work. They helped to cut back vegetation by the taxi rank, the bus stops and the area that backs onto the nearby pub.

Forest Lodge Garden Centre, one of the gold sponsors of Farnham in Bloom, provided plants, knowledge and expertise.

Green fingered children



Children from 18 local schools and nurseries visited the Council's greenhouses to plant hanging baskets which were later displayed in the town and at the schools.

Town Councillors and local community groups took part in the autumn Big Pick Week and collected several sacks of rubbish.

Cemeteries

Farnham Town Council is responsible for burials which take place in its four cemeteries, for maintaining the cemeteries and the upkeep of the cemetery records.

The cemeteries are:

- Hale Cemetery
- Badshot Lea Cemetery
- Green Lane Cemetery
- West Street Cemetery



Between April 2014 and March 2015, there were 30 burials and 20 interment of ashes. We issued 67 memorial permits and around 100 families were assisted by the Cemeteries team.



Investing in improvements

The accessibility of each of the cemeteries was greatly improved following further investment in a programme of works to resurface cemetery footpaths. The existing pathways are being edged and resurfaced. New Cemetery noticeboards have been introduced with the old noticeboards recycled for use in the allotments.

Dogs in cemeteries

The public were consulted on managing dogs in cemeteries. The findings led to the regulations being changed so that dogs are allowed in the cemeteries but must be kept on a short lead.

Cemetery chapels

Green Lane Chapel was sold at auction to raise funds to reinvest in the cemeteries, and in particular in West Street Chapel and Hale Chapels. £120,000 has been invested during the year in bringing West Street Chapel back into active use and a sculptor will use it as a Workshop from April 2015.

Hale residents were asked for their views on a number of options for the future of the chapels in Hale



cemetery and work is progressing with a small group to see if the buildings can be brought back into use.

Seasonal tributes

Residents and visitors were invited to pay tributes to loved ones at Christmas by placing a personal message on a special seasonal memorial at each of Farnham's cemeteries.

Commemorative events and presentations

Armed Forces Day in June saw the Mayor of Farnham presenting the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment with a gavel to reaffirm the town's continued support of the regiment and the wish to develop ever-closer links.



In August, to mark the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War, people gathered at the Gostrey Meadow war memorial to light candles and participate in a one minute silence.

Representatives of the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment, members of the armed forces, uniformed services and local scout and guide groups took part in the Annual Remembrance Sunday parade organised in association with the Royal British Legion. On 11 November, pupils representing 12 local schools took part in a special service of remembrance at the war memorial in Gostrey Meadow.



The Hale war memorial was renovated in 2014 and followed on from the renovation of the Gostrey Meadow war memorial in 2013.

An historic link-up with the borough of Woodland Park in New Jersey, USA and Farnham Town Council took place in June. The connection with Woodland Park, formally known as West Paterson, began in the 1970s when the Farnham Girls' Choir visited the town to perform a concert.

2014 marked the centenary and as part of the celebrations, Mayor Keith Kazmark presented Farnham Town Council with a painting. The presentation took place over the internet during a specially convened Woodland Park council meeting and a Farnham Town Council meeting.

Farnham Neighbourhood Plan

The location of new homes in Farnham, the design of new development and the protection of community facilities and services are just some of the issues residents were asked to

Farnham's Future *it's for you to decide*

Have your say in the future of where you live by contributing your opinions towards Farnham's Neighbourhood Plan. Get involved by email or online.



neighbourhood.plan@farnham.gov.uk www.farnham.gov.uk/future

comment on in a survey that sought views on Farnham's draft neighbourhood plan.

The six-week consultation ran from 31 October to 5pm on 15 December. Neighbourhood planning aims to give communities more of a say on how Farnham will be developed. Over the past two years, Farnham Town Council has had discussions with residents, businesses and people who have an interest in the town to find out how they would like Farnham to be in 2031.

Farnham has employed a planning consultant to assist in drawing up policies for the Neighbourhood Plan and completing the required evidence base to ensure that the Plan will be robust enough to withstand the public examination.

The Town Council has been working with developers and statutory organisations to identify suitable sites for future housing needs, but has also faced challenges as there is insufficient Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space available for all the housing required. The absence of a Waverley Local Plan has seen a large number of large scale speculative development applications, and the Town Council is keen to expedite the completion of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Planning

Farnham Town Council considered over 800 planning applications and participated in a number of consultations from Surrey County Council and neighbouring authorities.

Tourism and Events



A successful programme of events was held in 2014-15. A Christmas Market was held for the first time in Castle Street and at The Bush Hotel. This supplemented the successful Food Festival which continues to go from strength to strength. Each event attracted around 10,000 people adding to the vitality of the local economy.

Farmers Market

The monthly farmers' market in Central Car Park was again shortlisted as the best Farmers' Market in Surrey being pipped at the post by a previous national winner of the award. Over 35 producers attend on a regular basis bringing fresh seasonal local produce at great value for local residents.

Music in the Meadow – June to September 2014

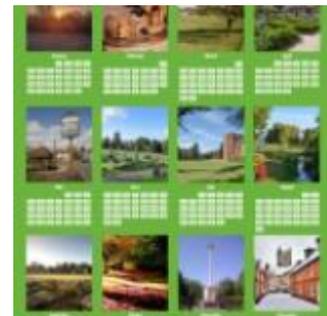
Over 6,000 people are estimated to have attended the 12 Music in the Meadow concerts held during the summer of 2014. Bands included a sax ensemble, piano and vocal accompaniment, acoustic folk blues, a rock duo and brass bands. As well as original numbers, the bands performed music from the 60s through to modern chart toppers, the musicals, swing, jump and jive.

Picnic in the Park

The weekend of Farnham carnival ended on a high with 1,500 enjoying an afternoon of live music and entertainment at Farnham's Picnic in the Park. The event included an afternoon filled with music.

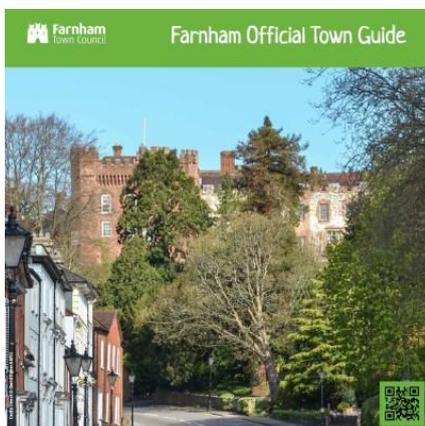
Photography competition

A photography competition was held to find images suitable for inclusion in the 2014 edition of the official Farnham Town Guide. Many entries were received with the best overall images considered for the front cover and other images used in the Guide and in the Farnham Official 2015 Calendar.



Communication

Town guide



A free, 40-page town guide was published to help promote Farnham and includes information about things to do, local history, art and culture and a guide to shopping and eating and drinking in Farnham. The guide is funded y through advertising sales and is available free of charge for visitors and residents.

Copies are available on-line and can be picked up from the Council Offices and from locations around Farnham.

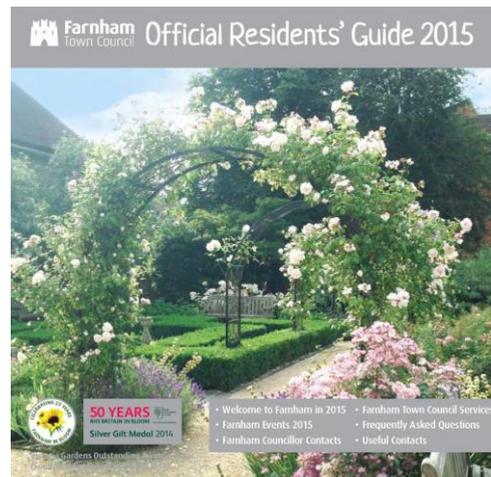
Residents' guide

Every household in Farnham received a copy of the revised and updated official 2015 residents' guide. It contains useful information about Farnham and the local area and contact details.

New website



Farnham's new website was launched and serves as a useful source of information about Farnham. The new site includes an events calendar for the free promotion of local events and a directory in which businesses, clubs and organisations can be listed free of charge.



Face to face contact

This year, invitations have been sent out to more than 1,200 randomly-selected local residents inviting them to attend a Mayor's coffee morning. The coffee mornings have been an opportunity for residents to meet the Mayor, their local town councillors and other residents who live in their area. Guests have also been able to ask questions about any matter relating to Farnham.

Farnham Town Council has also been out and about with the Neighbourhood Plan roadshows. The roadshow has visited every ward in the Town Council area. Councillors and officers were on hand to speak to residents and to answer questions about the Neighbourhood Plan.

Finally, the Annual Town Meeting is an opportunity for every person registered to vote in the Farnham area to come along and to find out what the Town Council has been doing in the last year, to hear presentations from local councillors and to ask questions.

Social media

Social media continues to be a popular way for people to interact with the Town Council. A new electronic newsletter was launched in March 2015 and will be published several times a year to subscribers. The first edition included a money-off voucher for the Italian Market.



Strategy and Finance

Audit and Accounts

Under the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 (SI 2011/817) the accounts for year ending 31 March 2014 for Farnham Town Council were duly audited by BDO LLP in accordance with the requirements of the Audit Commission Act 1998 and Code of Audit Practice. The results of the Audit were presented to Full Council in October 2014. In its unqualified audit BDO stated “on the basis of our review, in our opinion the information in the annual return is in accordance with proper practices and no matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met “.

A copy of the audited accounts for 2014/15 is available at www.farnham.gov.uk. The 2014/15 Audit will be undertaken by BDO in July 2015.

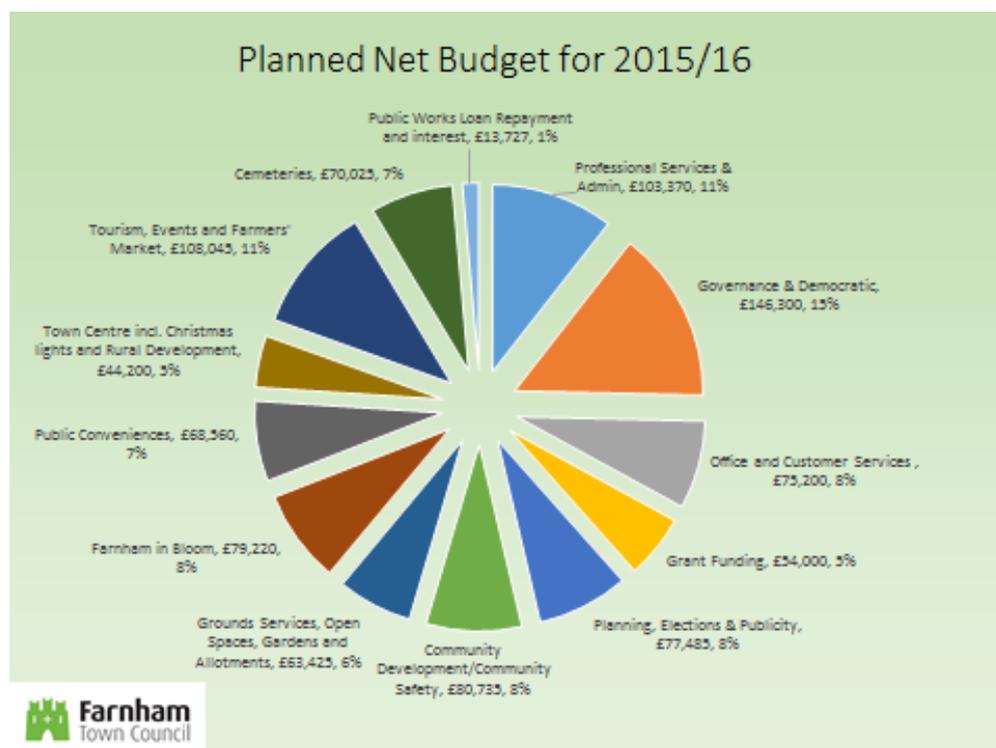
Budget and Precept 2015/16

Farnham Town Council agreed a modest increase in its council tax of 1.27 per cent. The rise means the Council will be able to deliver more of the services that contribute towards making Farnham a vibrant and attractive place to live. The extra money will secure the year-long calendar of events that includes the summertime Music in the Meadow concerts, the very popular Food Festival and four weeks of Christmas activities.

Over the past four years the increase in the Town Council’s share of council tax has been kept below the rate of inflation.

In 2015/16, Farnham Town Council will receive £1.11 per week from Band D properties, which is equivalent to £57.60 per year. Farnham Town Council receives around three per cent of the total council tax paid by its residents. The remaining 97 per cent goes to Surrey County Council, Waverley Borough Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey.

How the 2015/16 Net budget is broken down



FARNHAM TOWN COUNCIL PRECEPT 2015/16

Set out below is the list of service areas and budgeted costs and income that make up the Farnham Town Council precept for 2015/16.

| Service Area | Estimated 2015/16 Expenditure | | |
|--|-------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | Gross Expenditure | Income | Net Budget |
| Professional Services & Admin | £103,370 | £0 | £103,370 |
| Governance & Democratic | £146,300 | £0 | £146,300 |
| Office and Customer Services | £75,200 | £0 | £75,200 |
| Grant Funding | £54,000 | £0 | £54,000 |
| Planning, Elections & Publicity | £77,485 | £0 | £77,485 |
| Community Development/Community Safety | £84,435 | £3,700 | £80,735 |
| Grounds Services, Open Spaces and Gardens | £75,215 | £13,800 | £61,415 |
| Farnham in Bloom | £99,720 | £20,500 | £79,220 |
| Allotments | £15,110 | £13,100 | £2,010 |
| Public Conveniences | £68,560 | £0 | £68,560 |
| Town Centre incl. Christmas lights and Rural Development | £50,200 | £6,000 | £44,200 |
| Tourism, Events and Farmers' Market | £153,545 | £45,500 | £108,045 |
| Cemeteries | £142,525 | £72,500 | £70,025 |
| Public Works Loan Repayment and interest | £18,227 | £4,500 | £13,727 |
| TOTAL | £1,163,892 | £179,600 | £984,292 |
| Less Government Local Parish Council Tax Support Funding | | | -£23,235 |
| PRECEPT | | | £961,057 |

Grant funding

In 2014/15 Farnham supported a wide range of organisations and community groups with grants of over £50,000.

Set out below are the recipients of grants in 2014/15:

| | |
|--|---------|
| 1000 in 100 (Chamber of Commerce) | £155 |
| 3rd Farnham Scout Group | £1,933 |
| 40 Degreez | £2000 |
| Bells Piece | £2,000 |
| Bourne Beautification Project | £125 |
| Citizens Advice Waverley | £15,360 |
| Farnham Andernach Friendship Association | £200 |
| Farnham Carnival | £1,500 |
| Farnham Competitive Music Festival | £500 |
| Farnham Maltings (pop up crafts) | £1,500 |
| Farnham Maltings | £12,800 |
| Farnham Museum | £1,000 |
| Farnham Rotary (Bike Africa) | £130 |
| Farnham Sports Council | £500 |
| FCAMP (Bishops Steps Project) | £1000 |
| Folly Hill Infants School | £200 |
| Hale Carnival Committee | £800 |
| New Ashgate Gallery Trust | £1,500 |
| Opportunities | £400 |
| Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice | £2,000 |
| Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice (Vintage Car event) | £100 |
| Potters Gate School | £200 |
| Rowledge Cricket Club | £1,700 |
| Rowledge Scouts | £200 |
| Sandy Hill Community Bungalow | £1,000 |
| St Peters School PTFA | £1,000 |
| The Parish of the Bourne | £2000 |
| Transition Town Farnham | £200 |
| Weybourne Amateur Art Group | £200 |

South Street Trust

The Council acts as the Trustee for the South Street Trust (formerly known as the Farnham School of Science and Art) which awards grants from the income of an endowment set up by James Knight and John Knight in 1880 by for “art and allied subjects”. Initially the income was from the rent of 17 South Street but the building was sold and the funds invested. The trustees now distribute the interest on the invested funds.

In 2014/15 grants totalling £22,073.87 were awarded to the following:

| Organisation | Amount |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| 318 Ceramics | £1,300.00 |
| 40 Degreez | £795.00 |
| 8th Farnham Cubs | £150.00 |
| Abbey School | £2,000.00 |
| Badshot Lea Infant School | £1,500.00 |
| Creative Response Ltd | £2,000.00 |
| The Dance Movement | £1,500.00 |
| Edgeborough School | £500.00 |
| Farnham Pottery Trust | £1,900.00 |
| Farnham Maltings | £1,000.00 |
| FADEG | £900.00 |
| Folly Hill Infant School | £500.00 |
| Frensham Heights School | £1,000.00 |
| Hale School | £828.00 |
| Link in Craft | £75.00 |
| Post 19 | £2,000.00 |
| Rural Life Centre | £625.87 |
| St Andrew's Infant School | £700.00 |
| St Marys Infant School | £600.00 |
| St Polycarp's School | £350.00 |
| Weybourne Infant School | £650.00 |
| William Cobbett Junior School | £1,200.00 |
| TOTAL | £22,073.87 |

The Councillors representing Farnham for 2011-2015 are listed below. Elections take place on 7th May 2015 and a new Council will be elected for 2015-2019.

Your Farnham Representatives

Single-Hatted

Dual-Hatted

Triple-Hatted

*WBC Executive Member



Cllr David Attfield
Weybourne & Badshot
Lea



Cllr Jill Hargreaves
Firgrove



Cllr Jessica Parry
Shortheath &
Boundstone



Cllr David Beaman
Upper Hale



Cllr Stephen Hill
Moor Park



Cllr Julia Potts*
Upper Hale



Cllr Paddy Blagden
Castle



Cllr Sam Hollins-Owen
The Bourne



Cllr Susan Redfern
Firgrove



**Cllr Carole
Cockburn**
The Bourne



**Cllr Jennifer
O'Grady**
Hale & Heath End



**Cllr Jeremy
Ricketts**
Weybourne & Badshot
Lea



Cllr Pat Frost
Wrecclesham &
Rowledge



Cllr Stephen O'Grady
Hale & Heath End



Cllr Roger Steel
Moor Park



Cllr Carlo Genziani
Wrecclesham &
Rowledge



Cllr Graham Parlett
Castle



Cllr John Ward
Shortheath &
Boundstone

The Audited accounts for 2014/15 will be available from September 2015.

Farnham Town Council is interested in your views and opinions so please keep in touch.

Council Offices

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Mayor 2014/15:

Councillor Jeremy Ricketts

Deputy Mayor 2014/15

Councillor Jill Hargreaves

Spokesperson for the Council: Councillor John Ward

Town Clerk:

Iain Lynch

Honorary Town Crier:

Jonathan Jones

