

Annual Review 2023/24



This annual report is the first since the Town Council elections in 2023. Soon after being elected, the new councillors announced that their priorities would be to focus on looking after the environment and investing in younger people.

These plans took shape in 2023 and will continue to progress in 2024/25 with an additional £90,000 allocated to providing much needed support and activities for young people, and a further £40,000 for environmental and community initiatives.

Farnham Town Council has a reputation for making a difference and is able to make its resources go further thanks to the support it receives from hundreds of volunteers, the town's community organisations and businesses that sponsor various initiatives.

The day-to-day management of Farnham Town Council's core services is delivered by 17 full time equivalent members of staff. The team is led by the Town Clerk and decisions about the operation of the council are made by elected councillors.

During 2023/24, Farnham Town Council managed four cemeteries, eight allotment sites organised a programme of community events and improved the town's street scene and open spaces. The council considered and gave its views on around 1,000 planning applications and hosted several civic events.

Apr



- Michael Stephens won the competition to be Farnham's new town crier.
- A Hands Turn, inspired by photos of barley stored in conical piles at the Maltings, was unveiled. It was funded as a result of a development at UCA.
- A community fair was held at Gostrey Meadow to recruit volunteers for Farnham in Bloom and other environmental groups.

May



• Gostrey Meadow was a sea of red, white and blue as well-wishers gathered to celebrate the King's Coronation.

- Farnham's Big Help Out attracted over 100 volunteers for environmental projects.
- Volunteers led 30 walks at the Farnham Walking Festival.
- The elections saw 14 Farnham Residents and 2 Liberal Democrats elected onto Farnham Town Council for the eight new Farnham wards.

Jun



• Recycle, reuse and repair' was the theme for the 2023 Sustainability Festival, which was jointly organised by Farnham Town Council and Farnham Community Farm.

- Shoppers were enticed into Farnham with the launch of a competition to win £1,000 and 'Treat Yourself in Farnham'.
- Music lovers were treated to an experience which combined the best bits of the proms with popular music at Proms & Pop in the Park.

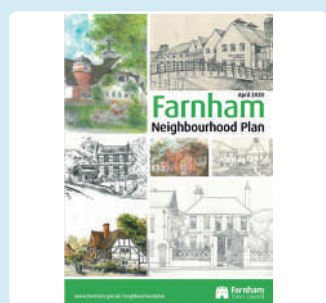
Jul



• The award-winning Hale Chapels' Garden was officially opened. The quiet space is on the site of two former chapels which had fallen into disrepair.

- Sir Ray Tindle CBE and Lady Beryl Tindle MBE were the latest names to be unveiled on the Notable Names of Farnham wall.
- The Extreme Mountain Bike Show provided free summer holiday entertainment for younger people.
- Green Flags were awarded to Gostrey Meadow, Badshot Lea Cemetery and West Street Cemetery.

Aug



- Farnham Town Council started a legal challenge against the Planning Inspector's approval for a housing development in Waverley Lane contrary to the Neighbourhood Plan.

Sept



- A exhibition of the work of Pauline Baynes, illustrator of J.R.R. Tolkien's "Lord of the Rings" and C.S. Lewis's "Narnia", went on show at Farnham Town Hall as part of Heritage Open Days, courtesy of Alberto Ceccatelli.

- Stallholders showcased the finest of local and international flavours at the Farnham Food and Drink Festival.
- Farnham in Bloom achieved its best ever performance at the South and South East in Bloom awards with nine gold awards and five best in category.

Oct



- October Craft Month took place with over 100 craft events happening in the town and surrounding areas.
- Local groups were invited to apply for funds from two grant pots totalling more than £50,000.
- An awards ceremony was held for the people who helped the town achieve its best performance ever at South & South East in Bloom.

Nov



- The town turned out for Farnham's annual remembrance Sunday parade.



- Love was in the air at the Christmas lights switch-on when local man Jay proposed to his girlfriend Louisa who said 'yes' before a delighted crowd of around 2,000 people.
- Farnham Town Council was selected as a 2024 regional finalist in the prestigious Civic Trust Awards for its creation of Hale Chapels' Garden. This followed an announcement of a category winner award at the BALI National Landscape Awards.

Dec



- People came together for the Mayor of Farnham's Civic Christmas Carol Service with wonderful music by Farnham Youth Choir.

- Despite regular downpours, people flocked to the Farnham Christmas Market. There were around 200 stalls selling unique, locally crafted gifts, lovely Christmas ornaments and festive food and drink.
- Shoppers were encouraged to Christmas shop in Farnham with a competition to win a hamper packed full with goodies from local businesses.

Jan



- A prominent Lombardy poplar in Gostrey Meadow had to be felled for safety reasons. A replacement tree was planted near the site.

- Tickets were released for Farnham Literary Festival. Hugh Bonneville topped the bill of a line-up which included best-selling authors and local talent.
- Music in the Vineyard brightened up a dreary Sunday winter afternoon with live music and refreshments.

Feb



- Glass artist Fiona Byrne took up her position as Farnham World Craft Town's first artist in residence.

Mar



- Local people rolled up their sleeves for a community clear up at Hale Cemetery.

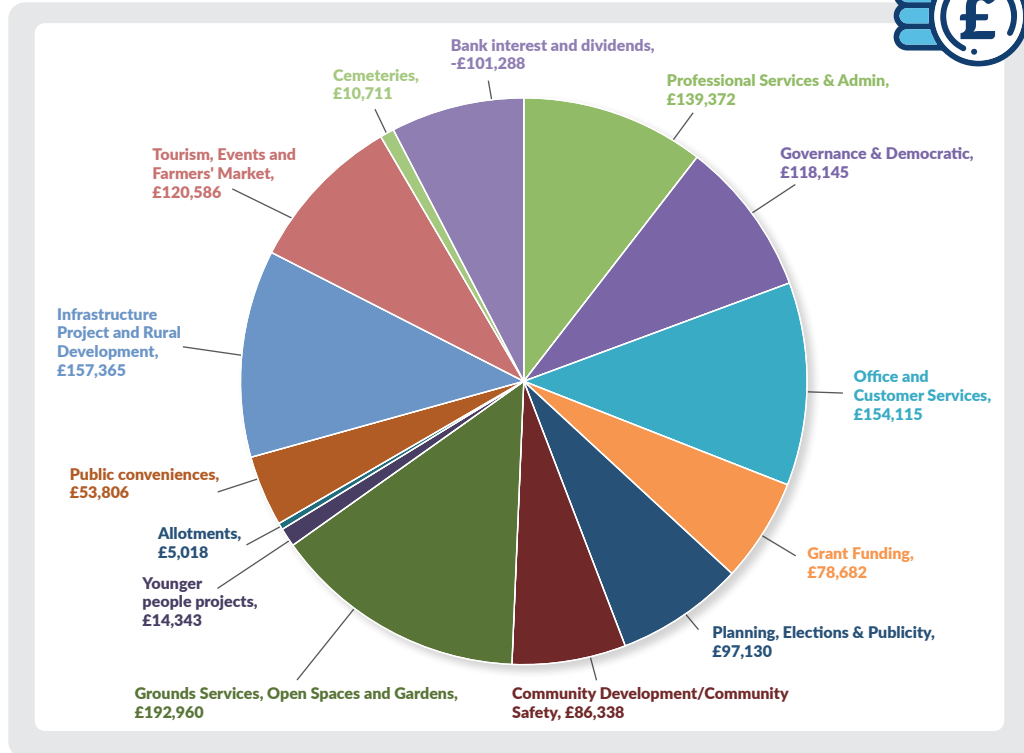


- The third Farnham Literary Festival was a big success with 40 events over ten days.
- Local people wanting to do something beneficial for nature turned out in force for the Farnham in Bloom Community Day.



Farnham Town Council

2023/24 Net Expenditure



60
community events organised by Farnham Town Council and partners.

50,000
plug plants planted in 250 hanging baskets and 100 planters and troughs and 30,000 bulbs planted.

500
bags of rubbish collected by volunteer litter pickers.

23,000
hours generously given by volunteers.

13,089
followers across Farnham Town Council social media channels.

For a copy of the annual report and financial statement 2023/24, please email customer.services@farnham.gov.uk or go online.



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