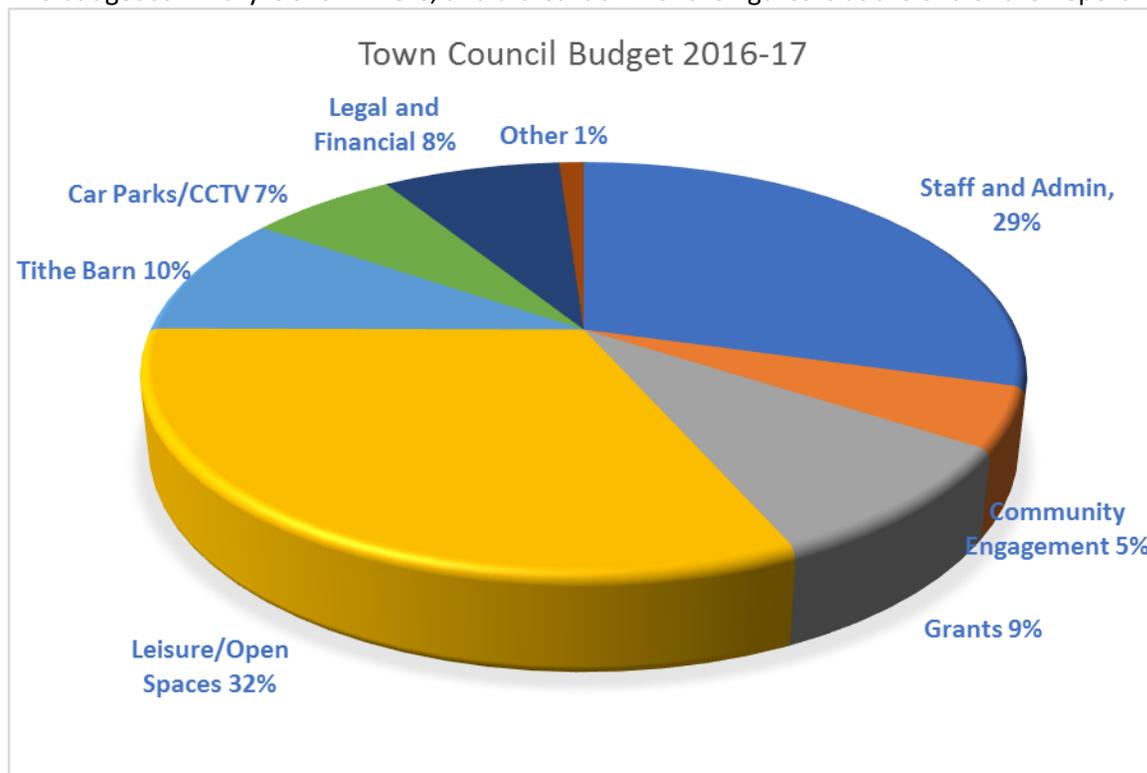


Nailsea Town Council Annual Report 2016-17

The budget summary is shown here, and a breakdown of the figures is at the end of the Report.



The last twelve months have been very busy for our town and the Town Council. Once again, the residents of Nailsea have excelled themselves with their generosity and support for the many activities that make this a great town to live in, as was emphasized in the feedback from the Town Consultation held at the end of 2016, with the comments that Nailsea offers:

- a good quality of life
- a positive sense of community
- a quiet and pleasant environment

Full details of the feedback from the Consultation are on the Town Council's website.

In 2016 the Town Council was awarded Quality Council Foundation status. We have previously held Quality Council status; however, this new award meets more rigorous criteria set by the National Association of Local Councils.

Last May the Town Council adopted a 5-year Strategic Plan for the town. It was decided that implementation of the plan would follow the Town Consultation so as to reflect the views of the residents. Now that we have the results of the consultation the Town Council will develop the strategy for the town to cover leisure provision, strategic planning, environmental issues, community engagement and governance. The strategy will also take account of the consequences of the further cutbacks in the services North Somerset Council is able to provide. The Town Council will be looking to maintain and develop facilities and services within the town for the future where they can.

As an example of how we can maintain and develop facilities, last July saw the opening of our new Skatepark. This was a fine example of collaborative working to achieve the best outcome. Led by the Nailsea Skatepark Project Team, the users of the existing park were asked to help design a new state of the art facility. They then went on to raise over half of the funds required to construct it. The people of Nailsea, once again, showed their generosity with their contributions and now we have a skatepark that is one of the best in the southwest.

A further example of team work was the Christmas Fair, held last December. A small determined group came together and working with the Town Centre company produced a Christmas Fair that will live long in the memory. There were so many activities for all ages and it showcased Nailsea as a town that has so much to offer and residents who work tirelessly for their town.

Over the last three years the Town Council has been developing a concept called 'Nailsea Place'. The purpose of Nailsea Place is to create a centre where people can meet for mutual support, the sharing of ideas and learning from each other in a safe environment to improve their health and wellbeing. To achieve this the Town Council has purchased 65 High Street – formerly known to many as Youth House. This building will be developed as a hub for a network of activities and plugged into the services provided by the public, commercial, charity and voluntary sectors in other locations.

It will be a centre providing advice on where to find support services and activities; a venue for information and a base for local events, clubs, hobbies, volunteering opportunities, benefits advice, adult skills, employment programmes, money management, healthy lifestyle programmes and much more. This is about people being empowered to take positive actions to manage their own wellbeing. 65 High Street will also continue to be used as a centre for Youth activities. Now that we have certainty over the ownership of the building, dedicated space will be given to the youth services team to customize it for their needs and for them to create a real home for themselves.

As a nation we have a housing shortage that affects people of all ages across the country. Nailsea has not seen any significant new housing built for over a decade and as a result people of all ages are unable to find the right accommodation for their needs in our town. It is a situation that has to change and announcements made by North Somerset Council over the last twelve months are going to have an impact on Nailsea. Following a long debate the Planning Inspector concluded that North Somerset Council has to build around 21,000 new homes across North Somerset in the period up to 2026.

What this means for Nailsea is that around 1000 new homes are to be built between now and 2026. The sites and numbers have been allocated by North Somerset Council and have been published for all to see and consultation has been undertaken. Whilst there is a wide range of views as to where these homes should be built, if the numbers are not achieved, and North Somerset Council is seen to be falling behind their target, there is a real danger that housing development will take place on unallocated sites, such as Youngwood Lane. As a town we need to work together to meet the housing demand and to make sure that development is undertaken within an agreed structure. Unstructured development will be bad for the town.

As you will be aware the Town Council has sold land on Engine Lane to Barratt Homes to build

183 homes, which will make a small contribution to the overall requirement of 1000 homes.

In 2016 the councils of North Somerset, Bristol City, South Gloucestershire and Bath & North East Somerset published the 'West of England Joint Spatial Plan'. This plan calls for 2,800 new homes to be built to the west of Nailsea between 2026 and 2036. This will have a really significant effect on our town. The Town Council has already responded to the consultation that took place at the end of 2016 and there is expected to be further feedback and consultation later this year. As a town we need to be prepared to challenge the proposals for such a significant change to our town and respond with positive counter proposals that recognize the need for growth but in a manner that improves our town and brings with it the appropriate infrastructure requirements.

Finally, I wish to thank all of our staff who work tirelessly on behalf of the Town and Town Council – Ian, Pennee, Emma, Nicky, Mark, Mandy and Sue. Sue retired last November after 24 years with the Town Council and we wish her well in her retirement. And last September, after attending a Council meeting in the evening, Emma went home and shortly afterwards gave birth to Isabelle. Such is the dedication of our staff she waited until the meeting was finished! Emma returned in April and we thank Corinne for providing maternity cover so ably.

CLlr David Packham, Town Council Chair

April 2017

How has the Council spent your money?

The total expenditure budget of the Council in the year was £548,336 and the precept was £457,606: the 4th year in a row when it has remained unchanged. The Precept accounts for 87% of income and the Council also generates funds from other activities, such as hiring the Tithe Barn (10% of the total), allotments, grazing on its land at Gaulacre and market canopy hire.

The major items of revenue expenditure are:

Staff, office and administration costs: £160,350 (29% of the total budget) - this includes: office staff, Caretakers, Town Orderly and Farmers' Market Manager, office costs and web-site.

Grants: £50,722 (9%)

Community Engagement: £25,970 (5%) - this includes the web-site and Town Talk in the North Somerset Times.

Leisure and open spaces: £174,326 (32%) - this includes: youth services, maintenance and improvement of sports fields, public rights of way, woodlands, open spaces, Nailsea in Bloom, planting and watering, Garden of Rest, bus shelters, litter and dog bins, allotments, play equipment, Farmers and Craft markets, Christmas lights and street lighting.

Tithe Barn: £52,300 (10%) – Events' Coordinator, caretakers, maintenance and repairs.

Legal and banking: £42,948 (8%) - legal and professional fees, banking costs, loans, audit and insurance.

Car parks and CCTV: £35,800 (7%)

Other: £5,920 (1%) - includes contingency costs.

The diverse activities of the Town Council require many hours of councillors' time and it is worth noting they do not receive any allowances for their work.