

Annual Report 2024/25

Serving our community

Stowmarket TOWN COUNCIL



Front Cover Image:
Mayor Terence Carter
at the Stowmarket Food
& Drink Festival.

Design: Paul Oldman at
Smith (www.smithltd.co.uk)

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Mayor's introduction

Councillor Terence Carter
Town Mayor

The past year has been one of immense challenges and even greater triumphs. It has been my honour to serve as Mayor of Stowmarket, a town full of resilience, warmth, and community spirit.

My theme this year – 'Ascending Adversity: Together We Shall Overcome' – has truly come to life. From neighbours helping neighbours, to support for community initiatives, I have witnessed first-hand the generosity and compassion that define Stowmarket.

With your support, we raised £4,211.72 for Red Gables and The Benjamin Foundation, two charities that make an enormous difference. Thank you for every raffle ticket purchased, event attended, and donation made.

Despite the less-than-ideal weather, events such as StowFiesta, the Food & Drink Festival, and civic occasions were well attended. The unfortunate cancellation of the Christmas Fayre due to high winds was met with understanding, and indoor festivities still brought joy. We celebrated difference this year with a Civic Celebration rather than a Civic Service, held at the John Peel Centre to reflect our multifaith, multicultural community. From quizzes to history walks, to countless acts of everyday kindness – thank you, Stowmarket. It has been a joy and privilege to be your Mayor.

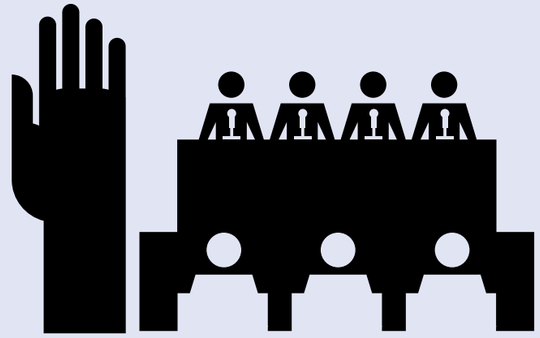
Town Mayor Councillor Terence Carter's Civic Celebration.

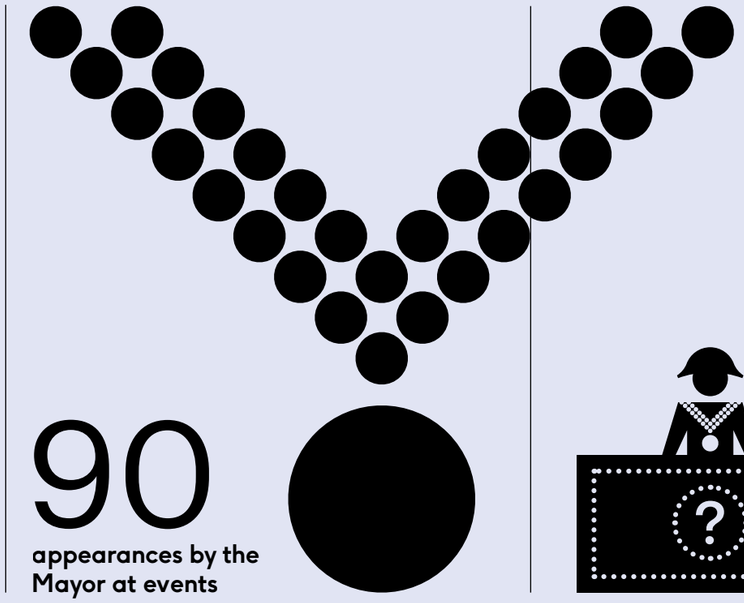


MAY

Annual Town Meeting
The Annual Town Meeting was held on Wednesday, 1st May 2024, A key highlight of the meeting was the official election of Councillor Terence Carter as Stowmarket Town Mayor for the 2024/25 civic year. Nominated and elected by his fellow councillors, Councillor Carter's appointment was met with unanimous support and marks a continued commitment to inclusive, community-focused leadership.

This annual event continues to play a vital role in reinforcing local democracy, transparency, and civic pride, offering residents a direct insight into the workings of their Town Council.



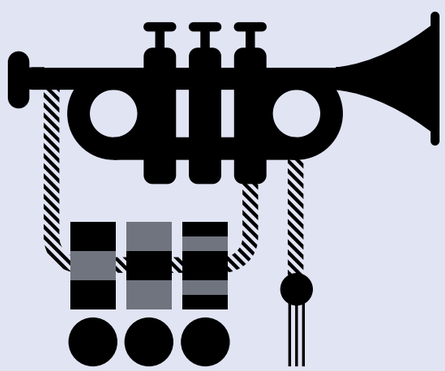


FEBRUARY

Mayor Charity Quiz
17 teams enjoyed a night of quizzing at Hillside Community Centre all in aid of raising money for the Mayor's charities on Saturday 8th February 2025. Congratulations to The Uninvincibles – the winning Team. The event raised a total of **£1,036** which has been shared between Red Gables and The Benjamin Foundation.

OCTOBER

Civic Celebration
Town Mayor, Councillor Terence Carter, held his Civic Celebration on Sunday, 20th October, at the John Peel Centre for Creative Arts. A procession from Milton House included Consort Bistra Carter, his daughter Elizabeth Carter and Civic dignitaries. The day was very well received by the local community, shining a light on the Mayoral theme for 2024/25 'Ascending Adversity'.





Town Clerk's Welcome

David Blackburn, Town Clerk

It has been another busy year in the life of the Town Council. The past year will probably be remembered first, and foremost, for the launch of the new Town Rangers service. It has been an immensely popular initiative, receiving widespread praise from across the local community. People like to feel proud of the place where they live, and the contribution made by the Town Rangers has not gone unnoticed and reinforced the sense of community pride that exists in the town.

The relationship between the Town Council and Mid Suffolk District Council has become stronger over the past 12 months, with many areas of joint working focussing primarily on the town centre. The District Council has launched a series of funding initiatives totalling over £2 million, including the Gateway Fund, Shopfronts Project, Town Centre Grants Scheme and Wayfinding Project. There has also been a town centre "week of action" which has seen pressure washing, painting and cleaning through a partnership between the District Council's REACT Team and the Town Council's Town Rangers. Further projects have also received financial support including the Town Centre Activity Programme (for Market Days), and the Parish Churchyard Community Space Project.

It has also been a big year for the Mayoralty. The Town Mayor, Councillor Terence Carter adopted as his Mayoral theme "ascending adversity". He then demonstrated ably, that having a range of disabilities should not prevent anyone from taking on the civic role of Mayor and serving their local community - to the very best of their ability.

The Regal continues to broaden its appeal as a multi-purpose entertainment venue. Regal Manager, Bethany Couch, reached out to Broadway and West End star, Kerry Ellis who lived locally and performed at an early age on the Regal stage. Kerry readily accepted an invitation to become the patron of the Regal. This was followed by a special "homecoming" concert which was enjoyed by everyone who was fortunate enough to see it.

The Town Council, of course, never stands still. It has been quick to respond to the Government's proposals for Devolution and Local Government Restructuring by engaging with the town's Member of Parliament, Suffolk County Council, Mid-Suffolk District Council, and the Suffolk Association of Local Councils about future arrangements. It has also been clear that it is ready to talk further about the transfer of assets and services where opportunities exist, and where they might serve the best interests of local residents on a financially sustainable basis.

Overall, it has been a memorable year. Town Councillors and Town Council staff have worked hard together to make a difference in the town, and my thanks go to everyone who has played a part in this.

A year in figures...

88,709
admissions to the Regal

60K
visitors to Stowmarket Community Centre

334K
social media reach (up 47%)

11K
'Catch-Up' magazines printed and distributed

56
compositing loads by town rangers

15K+
people at events

LOCAL COUNCIL AWARD SCHEME GOLD

The Quality Gold Award demonstrates that a council is at the forefront of best practice and achieves excellence in governance, community leadership and council development. Quality Gold councils provide leadership for their communities, bring people together, have excellent business planning processes, ensuring value for money as well as constantly seeking new innovations and opportunities to improve. They highlight the very best we, as a sector, can achieve for our communities.

‘A Quality Gold Council’

Stowmarket Town Council aims to be a high-performing local council. Since 2022, it has been accredited as a “Quality Gold Council” in accordance with the Local Council Awards Scheme. Fewer than 1% of local councils have received this level of accreditation, and it is something that the Town Council is committed to retaining in the future through a commitment towards continuous improvement and innovation.

Whilst progress does not always come in a straight line, there are many areas of its work where it is stronger and performing at a higher standard than when it was first accredited in 2022. Equally, it recognises that opportunities exist for further improvement. Overall however, the Town Council has become one of the strongest Town Council’s in the region through a mixture of both change and continuity in its approach.

Town Councillors have been highly supportive in providing the resources necessary, whenever needed, to ensure that the Town Council is successful and that value for money is achieved in the use of public funds.

SERVING OUR COMMUNITY
Stowmarket
TOWN COUNCIL

A clear commitment to improvement

A cleaner, greener Stowmarket: Launch of the Town Ranger Service

To mark its 50th anniversary, Stowmarket Town Council launched a new Town Ranger Service – a dedicated frontline team working to improve the cleanliness and appearance of the town.









Town Ranger tasks include:

- Cutting back overgrown hedges and vegetation
- Jet-washing pavements and hard surfaces
- Cleaning bins, street signs and public benches
- Removing litter and graffiti
- Supporting planting schemes and general environmental upkeep.



Since launching in September 2024, the Town Rangers have become a visible and valued presence in Stowmarket. Equipped with branded uniforms, a custom van with an onboard pressure washer, a new electric vehicle with a caged back, and a range of portable tools, the team is able to reach and enhance all corners of the town, tackling a wide range of improvement tasks.

Why the service was introduced
In recent years, local authorities across the country have faced growing pressure on their budgets, particularly in delivering essential services such as adult social care, children's services, and highways maintenance. As a result, the routine upkeep of public spaces has declined in many areas. Stowmarket Town Council recognised the impact this was having locally – with residents increasingly highlighting areas that had not been maintained for some time. In response, the Town Council created the Town Ranger Service to help fill the gap, restore pride in the local environment, and meet the public's expectations for a well-kept town.

"We are responding to residents wanting to see more resources allocated to improving the appearance of the town."

Councillor Terence Carter
Town Mayor

A lasting legacy
The launch of the service reflects a clear commitment to listening to residents, acting on local priorities, and enhancing the town's environment. One task at a time, the Town Rangers are helping Stowmarket look its best – and ensuring that everyone can take pride in the place they call home.

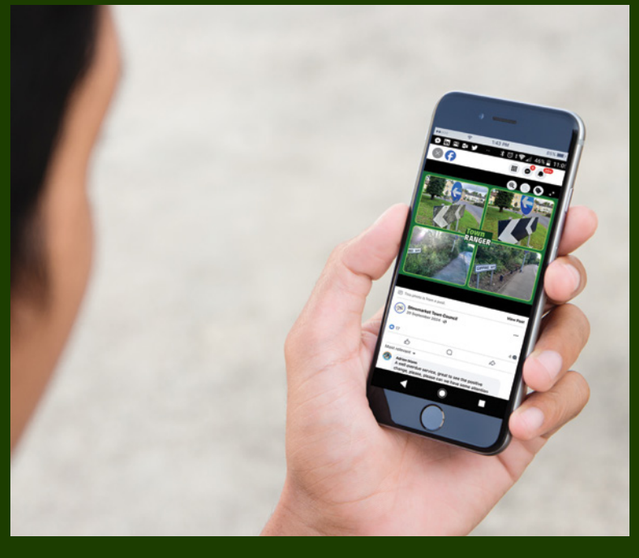
Early progress and impact
In just a few months, the Town Rangers have carried out improvement work across dozens of locations in Stowmarket, including areas that had not received attention for many years. The team has introduced a new "**ward working**" approach, focusing on one ward at a time for a number of weeks – ensuring a more co-ordinated and visible effort delivering consistent results that residents can see.

"The contribution made by the Town Ranger service hasn't gone unnoticed and has reinforced community pride."

David Blackburn
Town Clerk

The public has been kept updated through before-and-after photos shared every Friday on the Town Council's social media pages – a feature that has quickly become very popular.







Recreation Ground Entrance



Responding to community need

Public consultation and future development: The Recreation Ground

"The Town Council is dedicated to creating a space that is welcoming, functional and enjoyable for all"

Karl Daniels
Head of Community Services

Stowmarket Town Council remains committed to enhancing the Recreation Ground and transforming it into a vibrant, accessible space for the entire community. Building on the success of the Stage 1 Public Consultation held in January 2024, the Town Council has carefully reviewed public feedback and is working diligently to develop plans that reflect the aspirations of local residents.

New facilities


Adventure Area



Public consultation and future development: The Recreation Ground

Public consultation process

By listening to the community and prioritising their input, we aim to create a park that will serve as a central hub for recreation, relaxation, and social activities, for residents and visitors alike.

"An outdoor space for drama and music"

Findings from Stage 1 Consultation

Conducted through an online survey, this revealed overwhelming support for a new play area as a central feature of the Recreation Ground's redevelopment. Feedback clearly highlighted the community's desire for a safe, inclusive, and engaging space that caters to children of all ages and abilities. The new play area will not only be an essential addition to the park but also serve as a driving force for wider revitalisation efforts. This development will help turn the Recreation Ground into a dynamic, welcoming space that can be enjoyed by everyone, from children to families and visitors of all ages.

In addition to the new play area, the consultation also identified several other key priorities for the park's future, including:

- Creating a more vibrant, inclusive, and accessible environment for all users.
- Improving the park entrance to enhance accessibility and create a more inviting first impression.
- Installing more lighting and CCTV to improve safety and security across the park.
- Developing an outdoor performance space for community events, music, and entertainment.

Mock-up Designs

To help bring these exciting ideas to life and give the community a clearer vision of what the proposed changes could look like, mock-up designs have been developed.

These visual representations will be showcased during Stage 2 of the consultation, scheduled for Easter 2025.

The mock-ups will allow the community to see how their feedback is shaping the final design, ensuring the plans align with their vision for the park's future.

Stage 2 Consultation

The Stage 2 consultation will take place in-person, giving local residents the opportunity to engage with the mock-up designs and provide further input on the plans.

This phase of the consultation will build on the insights gathered in Stage 1 and ensure that the final plans meet the needs and expectations of the community.

The Town Council is excited to continue this open dialogue and make sure that everyone's voice is heard as we move forward.

Next steps

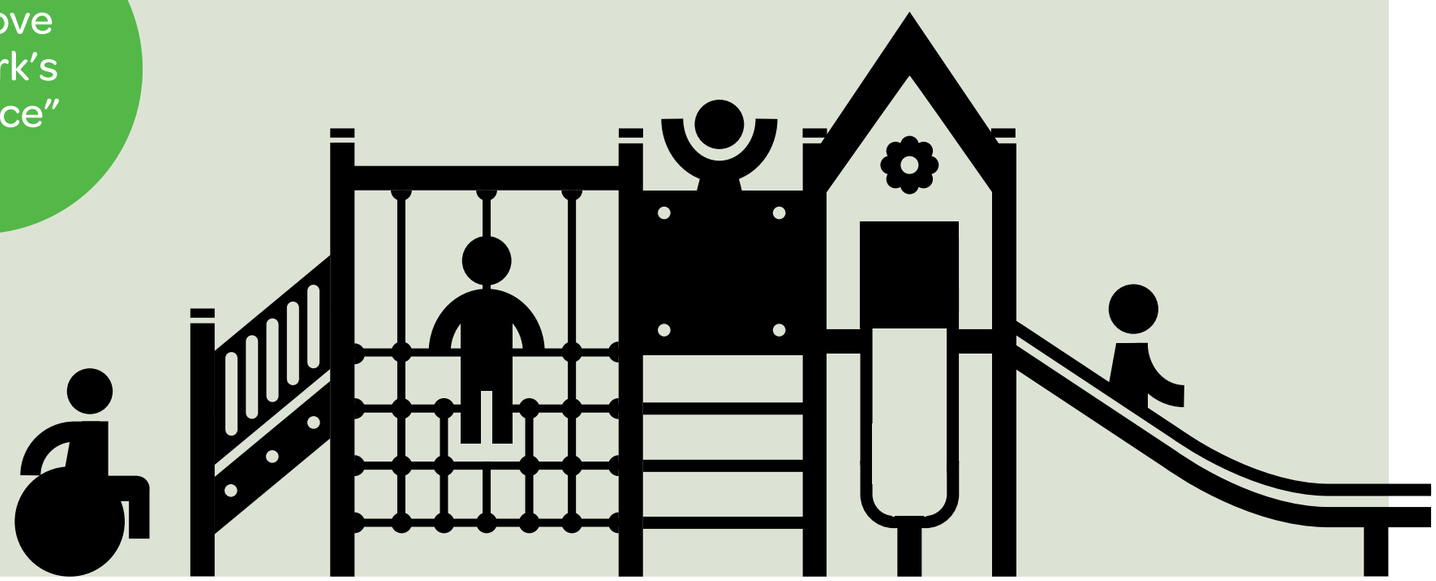
The valuable feedback from Stage 2 will play a crucial role in finalising the plans for the new play area and other enhancements to the Recreation Ground.

Work is anticipated to begin at the end of 2025.

"More lighting and CCTV"

"Improve the park's entrance"

"A space everyone can use"



Stowmarket Town Awards

Every two years, the Town Council hosts a very special event which provides an opportunity to recognise residents who do extraordinary things.





The youngest…and oldest award winners.

12
award categories

221
nominations – a record

10
– age of the youngest award winner

Recognising residents' achievements

The Awards Ceremony
The event is funded by Stowmarket Town Council in conjunction with local sponsors, without their support it would not be possible to hold such a prestigious event. Compered by BBC stalwart, Stephen Foster, the gala dinner, and presentation ceremony marking the 10th anniversary of the Awards, was held at the John Peel Centre on Friday 27th September 2024.

Award winners
A total of 12 awards were presented to local businesses, community leaders and sports champions who have all made a positive contribution to the life of the town.The winners included our youngest ever winner, 10-year old Thomas Baker, and England and Team GB rower, Phoebe Hayden. There were many well-known and popular recipients including Judith Thompson, Barry and Heather Salmon, Darren Dordoy and Stuart Huggins. The full list of Awards winners is shown opposite.
The evening provided a reminder to everyone, once more, of the incredible people that we have living, working, playing, and supporting others in Stowmarket. The Stowmarket Town Awards are due to be held once again in 2026.

"Thankyou to our sponsors for generously supporting these awards"

Young Person of the Year Award:
Thomas Baker
(Sponsored by Modece Architects)
Teacher/Youth Leader/Coach of the Year Award:
Stuart Huggins
(Sponsored by G Tydeman Jewellers)
Caring for People Award:
Mid-Suffolk Citizens Advice
(Sponsored by Stow Training)
Community Hero of the Year Award:
Helen Knock and The Osier Café Team (Sponsored by Lions Club of Stowmarket and District)
Sportsperson/team of the Year Award:
Phoebe Hayden
(Sponsored by Everyone Active)
Environment & Heritage Champion of the Year Award:
Judith Thompson
(Sponsored by Red Gables)
Local Business of the Year Award:
G Tydeman Jewellers
(Sponsored by Timberwolf)
Service with a Smile Award:
Molly Garnham
(Sponsored by Tesco)
Volunteer of the Year Award:
Julie Francis
(Sponsored by Craig Daniels Automotive)
Pride of Stowmarket Award:
Darren Dordoy
(Sponsored by Gateway 14)
The Stowmarket Award:
Barry and Heather Salmon
(Sponsored by MORAR Living)
Special Achievement Award:
Stowmarket Carnival Committee
(Sponsored by Jaynic).



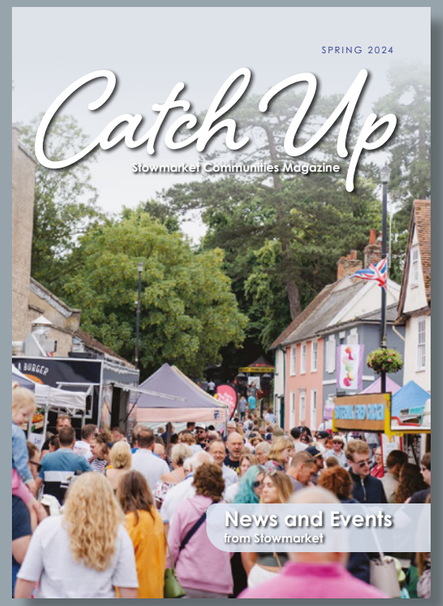


OTHER EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

‘Catch-Up’ Magazine

In April 2024, the latest edition of ‘Catch-Up magazine was distributed to households across Stowmarket. This annual publication provides residents with essential updates on town-wide initiatives, community events, and council news. To maintain consistent communication throughout the year, ‘Catch-Up’ is also issued as a seasonal newsletter during the summer, autumn, and winter months. These editions ensure that the community remains informed and engaged with ongoing developments, activities, and services across Stowmarket.

Keeping residents informed



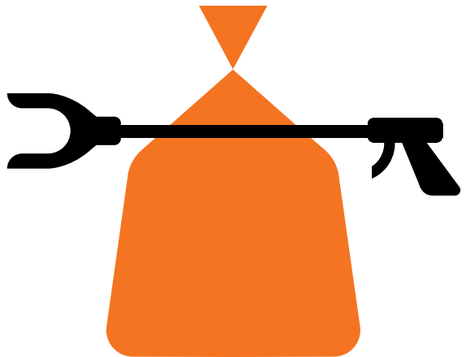
APRIL 2024



Improving our environment

Keep Stowmarket Tidy, Team Up To Clean Up

Held from Monday 2nd to Friday 5th April 2024, Keep Stowmarket Tidy Week marked its fifth consecutive year of uniting the community in a shared mission to enhance the town’s cleanliness and visual appeal. Residents, families, local businesses, and community groups came together throughout the week to take part in a variety of clean-up activities. The event’s centrepiece was the Team Up To Clean Up community action day, which saw over 40 volunteers engaging in a coordinated effort to litter pick from the Recreation Ground, surrounding local streets, and public spaces. This initiative continues to exemplify civic pride and collective action, reinforcing Stowmarket’s commitment to maintaining a clean, attractive, and welcoming environment for all.



JANUARY 2025

Logo rebrands

In January, in readiness for 2025 event season, Stowmarket Town Council rebranded three of their biggest community events. StowFiesta (renamed StowFest), Stowmarket Food & Drink Festival and Stowmarket Christmas Fayre, were refreshed to communicate a more family-friendly feel for all three events.

STOWFEST

STOWMARKET FOOD & DRINK FESTIVAL

STOWMARKET CHRISTMAS FAYRE

Supporting community events

StowFiesta

StowFiesta 2024 took place over the weekend of Saturday 25th and Sunday 26th May at Chilton Fields, in partnership with Stowmarket Rugby Club. Despite inclement weather, the spirit of the event was undampened as residents turned out in impressive numbers, equipped with wellies, umbrellas, and an unwavering enthusiasm. The two-day music festival showcased a diverse lineup of live performances, providing entertainment for all ages and reinforcing StowFiesta’s reputation as one of the town’s most anticipated annual events. From local acts to headline performances, the weekend offered a vibrant mix of music, food, and community celebration.

MAY 2024





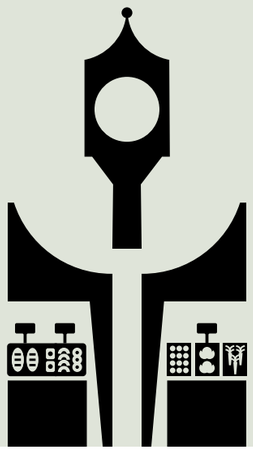




APRIL–OCTOBER 2024

OTHER EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Market improvements



Pilot scheme



In 2024, Stowmarket Market experienced a vibrant revival through the introduction of a new Farmers' Market and the continued success of Foodie Thursdays.





Farmers' Market

The **Farmers' Market**, launched in response to strong community interest, was piloted from April to October and held monthly alongside the traditional market. It featured a mix of local stallholders offering artisan products such as handmade candles, craft beverages, fresh produce, and quality meats. This new addition significantly enriched the town's market offering and laid the foundation for an ongoing, regular Farmers' Market in Stowmarket.

16

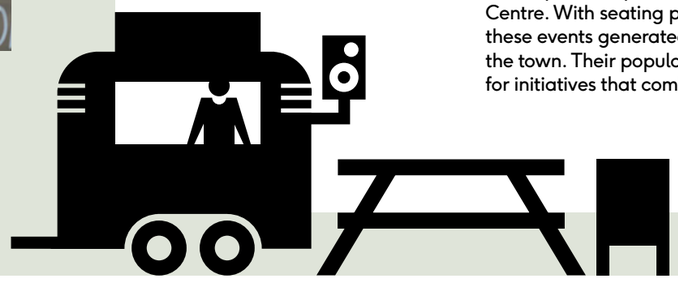
Foodie Traders

April – October 2024



Foodie Thursdays

Meanwhile, **Foodie Thursdays** returned for a second successful year. Each event brought a new hot food vendor to the Market Place, accompanied by live music performances coordinated by the John Peel Centre. With seating provided to encourage community engagement, these events generated a lively, welcoming atmosphere in the heart of the town. Their popularity continues to demonstrate strong local support for initiatives that combine culture, cuisine, and community.



Supporting local producers

Stowmarket Food & Drink Festival

Supporting local producers

The Stowmarket Food & Drink Festival 2024 attracted thousands of visitors to the town centre to celebrate the best of locally and regionally produced food and drink. Over 70 stalls lined the streets, offering everything from wood-fired pizzas and buttermilk chicken burgers to homemade fudge, local wines, and specialty lemonade. Live music, curated by the John Peel Centre, created a vibrant atmosphere in the Market Place, allowing visitors to enjoy entertainment alongside their culinary experience.















The Food Museum provided a family-friendly space where guests relaxed with handmade ice cream and local cider, while children played in a sand pit or tried hands-on activities like marshmallow toasting and bread making. The Festival of Beer and Brewing also drew interest from those keen to sample local ales.

In the Kitchen Theatre, local chefs demonstrated their skills to enthusiastic crowds, and Red Gables hosted face painting and interactive charity stalls. Local businesses benefited from the increased footfall, with steady crowds throughout the day – despite occasional afternoon showers.

JULY 2024

OTHER EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Memorial Tree

In July, Year 6 students from Wood Ley Primary School engaged in a poignant educational project on the Stowmarket Witch Trials. Moved by the historical injustices, the students reached out to Stowmarket Town Council with the vision of creating a lasting tribute to the victims. The Town Council was proud to support this meaningful initiative and collaborated with the students to establish a permanent memorial.
A tree was planted in Stowmarket Old Cemetery, symbolising remembrance and hope. Beneath it, a commemorative plaque was installed. This memorial stands not only as a tribute to those who suffered during the trials but also as a commitment to encouraging inclusivity, understanding, and historical reflection within the community. The initiative highlights the power of education and civic partnership in creating spaces that honour the past while shaping a more compassionate future.which can be found in Stowmarket Old Cemetery.



Commemorating our heritage

OCTOBER 2024



Promoting environmental stewardship

Bulb Planting Day

On Tuesday 8th October, Stowmarket Town Council staff were joined by local Councillors and the dedicated Volunteers of Stowmarket to take part in a community Bulb Planting Day. Together, the group planted over 2,000 crocus bulbs on the Crown Street Roundabout. This initiative forms part of the Council's ongoing commitment to enhancing public spaces and promoting environmental stewardship. The vibrant display of spring flowers will serve as a seasonal reminder of the value of community collaboration and civic pride.

NOVEMBER 2024



Remembrance Sunday & Armistice Day

Stowmarket Town Council co-ordinated events to mark Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day in liaison with the Stowmarket Branch of the Royal British Legion and the Parish Church of St Peter and St Mary. On Remembrance Sunday, we were delighted to host the Deputy Lord Lieutenant, Anthony Fairbanks-Weston, and representatives from Wattisham Flying Station and RAF Lakenheath.
The salute for the march past was taken by the Deputy Lord Lieutenant, and the Town Mayor, Councillor Terence Carter. As always, there were good attendances for all the commemorative events and particularly for Remembrance Sunday, with hundreds of people stretched out along the parade route from the Market Place to the Memorial Gates at the Recreation Ground. A poignant service of reflection also took place on Thursday 6th June to commemorate the 80th anniversary of D-Day.



Commemorating our heritage

Stowmarket Christmas Fayre

Stowmarket's Christmas Fayre was scheduled to take place on Sunday 24th November, and was expected to attract thousands of visitors to the town centre. With a vibrant programme of festive market stalls, fairground rides, and seasonal entertainment, the event promised to be a highlight of the town's year. However, due to Storm Bert, the difficult but necessary decision was made to cancel the event on safety grounds. Despite the disappointment after months of detailed planning and co-ordination, the response was overwhelmingly supportive with the festive atmosphere living on through a range of indoor activities held by partner venues.





We wish to thank all those involved in the organisation and delivery of the Christmas Fayre and looks forward to bringing the event back in 2025.

DECEMBER 2024

Partner venue events

The Regal delighted families with two performances of 'Santa's Christmas Cracker'.

The John Peel Centre welcomed visitors to a model railway exhibition by the Stowmarket Model Railway Club, along with children's crafts and music.

Stowmarket Library offered engaging craft sessions for children.

The Mix hosted a bustling indoor craft fair.

St Peter and St Mary's Church showcased a beautiful display of Christmas trees.

Promoting environmental stewardship



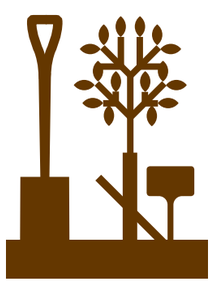
DECEMBER 2024

Community Tree Planting Day

On Tuesday, 17th December 2024, Stowmarket Town Council hosted its annual Community Tree Planting Day at the Recreation Ground. The event saw volunteers from Red Gables and the Town Council come together to plant seven mature trees – including London Plane, Lime, and Walnut varieties – around the perimeter of the site. The trees were generously donated by Mid Suffolk District Council for the ongoing Stowmarket Town Trees Eco Project, a local environmental initiative which has seen an impressive 943 trees planted to date. This collaborative effort reflects the town's continued commitment to enhancing green spaces, promoting biodiversity, and investing in a more sustainable future for Stowmarket.

943

trees planted to date



Our venues

2024 has been a year of progress, innovation, and connection across our venues in Stowmarket. Each facility has played a vital role in enriching the lives of residents and visitors alike, offering vibrant cultural experiences, essential services, and welcoming community spaces.

Milton House

Milton House, the official 'home' of Stowmarket Town Council, is named after the poet John Milton and is one of the town's most attractive and historic buildings. It accommodates both public and private sector organisations, including the Suffolk County Council Registration Service and Citizens Advice Mid-Suffolk. The Registration Service offers birth, marriage, and death registration services, and conducts ceremonies in the elegant John Milton Room, a stylish venue for weddings and civil ceremonies. The picturesque grounds of Milton House provide a beautiful backdrop for photographs. Citizens Advice Mid-Suffolk has been a long-term tenant, occupying multiple rooms within Milton House. Additionally, Milton House provides office space for Life Resolutions.



Stowmarket Community Centre

Facility enhancement

2024 was another successful year for Stowmarket Community Centre, with continued high levels of community engagement. The centre supported a diverse programme of activities, ranging from children's playgroups and fitness classes to social groups for older residents, cultural workshops, and wellbeing events.

The renovation of the Gainsborough Room this year significantly enhanced the building's usability and appeal. Improvements included new flooring, blinds, boxed-in pipework, and refreshed décor throughout. These updates contributed to increased bookings and received excellent feedback from users. The Community Centre continues to provide an accessible, inclusive, and affordable space that reflects the vibrancy and diversity of Stowmarket's population.

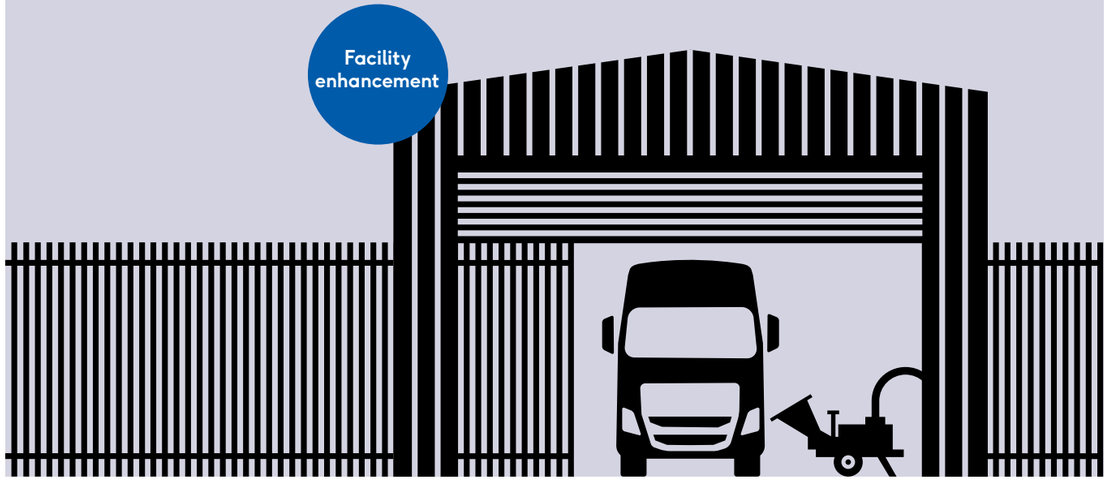


The Depot

Facility enhancement

A key element in supporting the Town Ranger Service has been the successful completion of enhancement works at the depot, carried out in close collaboration with our contractor. These improvements have transformed the facility into a secure and well-organised space for the storage of vehicles, tools, and equipment.

Furthermore, the Operations Team has undertaken a comprehensive reorganisation of the depot, establishing clearly designated storage areas. This has improved accessibility to essential resources, enhanced operational efficiency, and created a more functional and orderly workspace for the team.



The Regal

The Regal stage was graced by some phenomenal acts, including stars Colin Baker, Peter Purves, and not forgetting the Regal's new patron, Kerry Ellis.

With the acts on our Regal stage getting bigger and better, we recognised an opportunity to ensure our facilities were on par with the quality of our acts. A brand-new sound system was installed in December 2024 which increased the capabilities of the venue, improved sound quality, and ensured full coverage across the whole auditorium.

We have also upgraded our communications system for backstage and front if house, for seamless operations.

We have gained excellent feedback since our improvements, and it is positive to have state of the art equipment across the whole venue, both cinema and live shows!

The cinematic element of our multi-purpose venue also thrived, with some large releases such as 'Wicked', 'Gladiator 2', 'Beetlejuice Beetlejuice', 'Moana 2', and 'Bridget Jones: Mad About The Boy'.

"The Regal had an exciting year with lots of highlights"

New

sound system installled

+10%

increase in admissions – our best year to date.



JANUARY 2025



Hometown return for the Queen of the West End

In a heart-warming, full-circle moment for The Regal, General Manager Beth Couch, invited Kerry Ellis – a West End and Broadway star (and one of Beth's personal idols), back to the venue for a special 'homecoming concert'. Kerry, who grew up in Stowmarket and performed here as a child, opened with an announcement that she had accepted the role of Patron, strengthening her ties to the town and the Regal in particular. The news was followed by a fantastic concert performance.

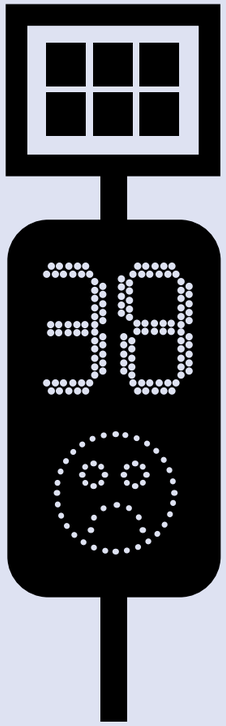


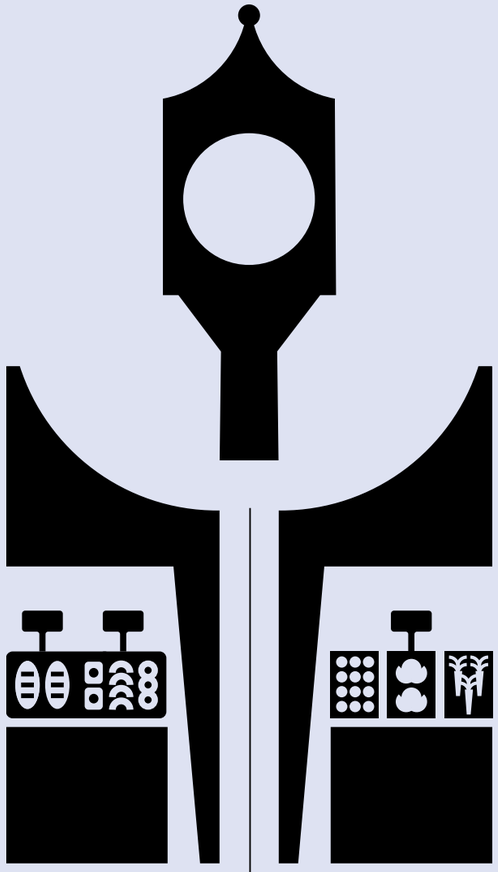
Kerry Ellis during her concert.

Council services & responsibilities

Speed Indicator Devices

We now have 7 speed indicators across the town.





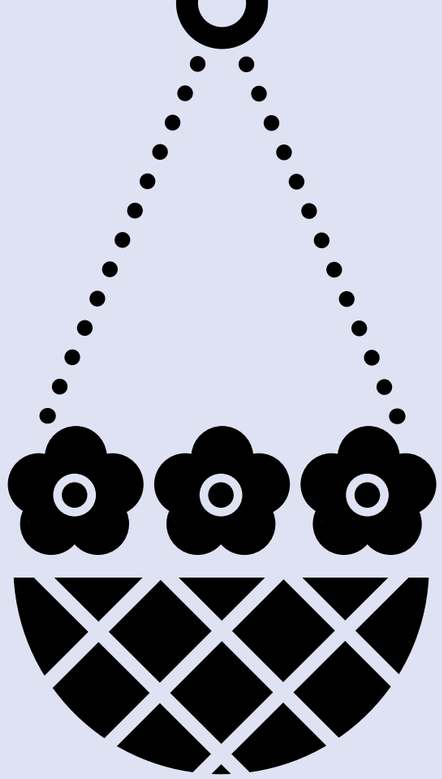
The Market

Stowmarket's rich market tradition continues, serving the local community every Thursday and Saturday in the Market Place, offering a variety of fresh produce, clothing, and crafts. Our market remains a vital aspect of our town's heritage and economy.



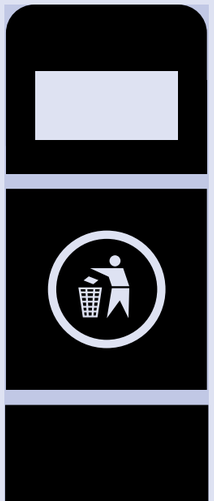
Waste Bins

We co-ordinate and maintain over 250 litter and dog waste bins across Stowmarket to sustain a clean and litter free environment.



Floral Displays & Planting

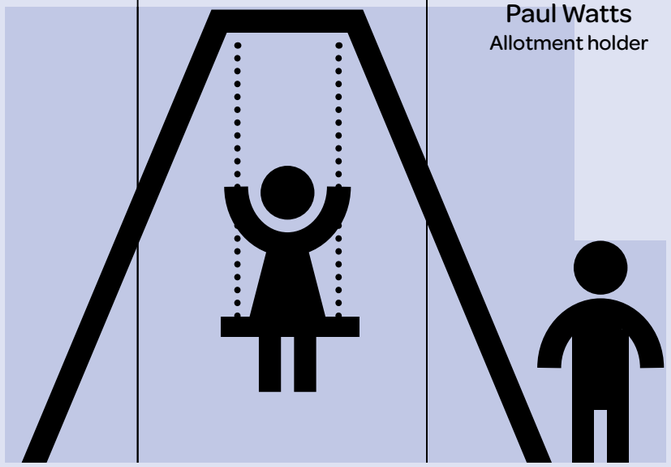
We enhance the town centre by providing vibrant floral displays, including hanging baskets, large planters, and flags, adding colour and charm, particularly during the summer months. Our hanging baskets, featuring water reservoirs, not only beautify the area but also contribute to water conservation and reduced maintenance time.





Play Areas & Open Spaces

We oversee the maintenance of six Play Areas and Open Spaces across Stowmarket, ensuring the safety and functionality of equipment through weekly safety checks and annual comprehensive inspections by experts. These areas provide essential recreational opportunities for children in our community.

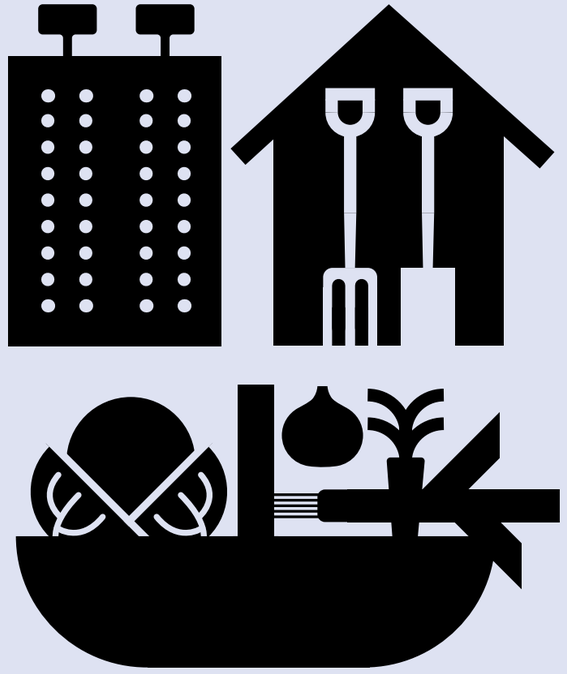


Community Safety/CCTV

We prioritise community safety through collaborative efforts with the Stowmarket Safer Neighbourhood Police Team and support for town centre CCTV. Our CCTV cameras equipped with the latest technology serve as valuable tools for law enforcement, ensuring Stowmarket remains a safe place.

"This is my happy place, all my concerns and worries disappear when I'm at my allotment"

Paul Watts
Allotment holder



Allotments

The Town Council has two allotment sites: Cemetery Fields has 49 individual plots and the other Hospital Fields has 60.

Cemetries

We maintain two cemetery sites, one area within the Old Cemetery is designated for the interment of cremated remains, providing a quiet and serene setting near two historic chapels. Surrounding areas are meticulously managed to promote wildlife and plant growth, encouraging a space conducive to rewilding efforts. The New Cemetery features burial plots, carefully maintained to create a peaceful environment suitable for services and contemplation.



The Town Council continues to update and safeguard burial records meaning we can assist with enquiries regarding historical burials conducted in our cemeteries.
We also authorise any work carried out to memorials. In the last year 17 applications were processed and 34 burials were arranged.

Council staff

Moving into the new financial year 2025/26, our current staff:



Town Clerk
David Blackburn
davidb@stowmarket.org



Head of Corporate Services
Sally Goonan
sallyg@stowmarket.org



Head of Community Services
Karl Daniels
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Corporate Services Assistant Manager
Annie Reynolds
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Leadership Support Officer
Sarah Ellice
sarahe@stowmarket.org



Public Services Officer
Liz Hughes
lizh@stowmarket.org



Community Engagement & Events Lead
Summer Lambert
summerl@stowmarket.org



Community Engagement & Events Officer
Emily Clarke
emilyc@stowmarket.org



Community Engagement & Events Officer
Molly Watling
mollyw@stowmarket.org



Community Centre Manager
Heather Tooke
heathert@stowmarket.org



Operations & Estates Manager
Paul Merry
paulm@stowmarket.org



Community Operations Lead
Emma Rogers
emmar@stowmarket.org



Property & Facilities Lead
Jack Robinson
jackr@stowmarket.org



Estate Specialist
Roger Benstead
rogerb@stowmarket.org



Lead Town Ranger
Darryl Grieves
darrylg@stowmarket.org



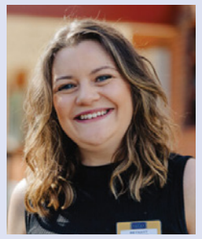
Town Ranger
George Alderton
georgea@stowmarket.org



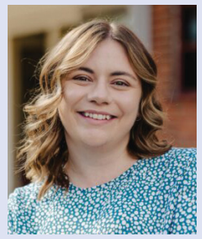
Town Ranger
Hugh Fitzpatrick
hughf@stowmarket.org



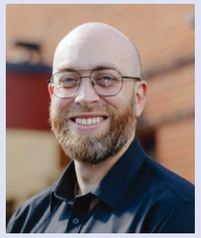
Town Ranger
Neil Berry
neilb@stowmarket.org



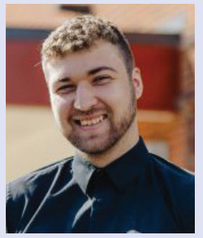
General Manager
Bethany Couch
bethanyc@stowmarket.org



Deputy General Manager
Lucy King
lucyk@stowmarket.org



Cinematic & Technical Lead
Samuel Wilden
samuelw@stowmarket.org



Customer Engagement & Development Lead
Archie Merritt
archiem@stowmarket.org

The Regal employs five additional full time staff members and many part time staff to help with the day to day running of the cinema. Full time staff members include: Darcey Graham, Peter Brosowsky, Sophie Parkington, Amberley Golledge and Kiera Samuel. Part time staff members include: Laurel Brett, Lorna Virr, Rachel Prentice, Olivia Martin, Erin Lemon, Angelica Morse, Jenna Wilson, Eloise Jackson, Bethany Marsh, Jacob Chapman, Isabelle Walsh, Freya Brown, Sophie Eames-Watts, Kian Mayes, Chloe Mayhew, Aaliyah Herman, Helen Sheldrake, Kimberley Hall and Cerys King.

Team members responsible for the cleanliness of Stowmarket Community Centre and the Town Council buildings include; Michelle Denny, Andy Bloomfield, Gill Mossop, Ali Huggins, Suzi Bloomfield and Enda Broderick.

Councillors



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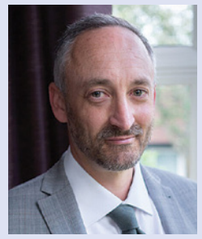
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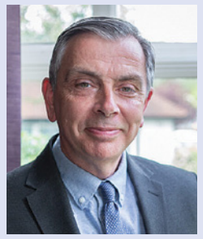
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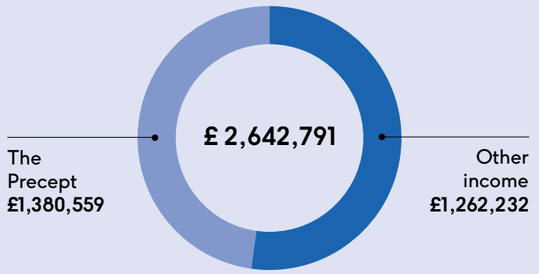
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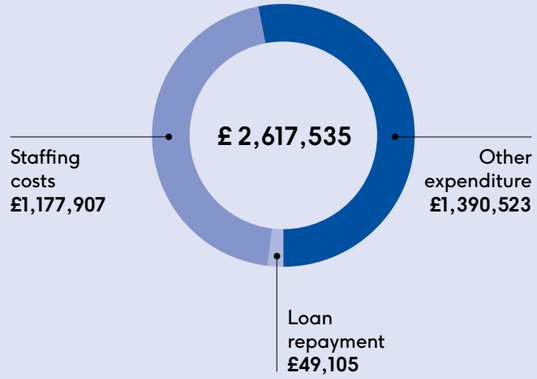
Council Finances
2024/25

Where our funds came from



The Town Council's element of your Council Tax for 2024/25 increased by 4.9% – £0.177p per week for a Band D property.

How the funds were allocated



Grants
Stowmarket Town Council is dedicated to supporting and strengthening various networks and community groups in Stowmarket, in the year 2024/25 **we awarded 33 grants totalling to £16,608** from Stowmarket Communities Grant Scheme, The Environment Fund and StowFund. These grants provided vital support to a wide range of schools, organisations and community groups.

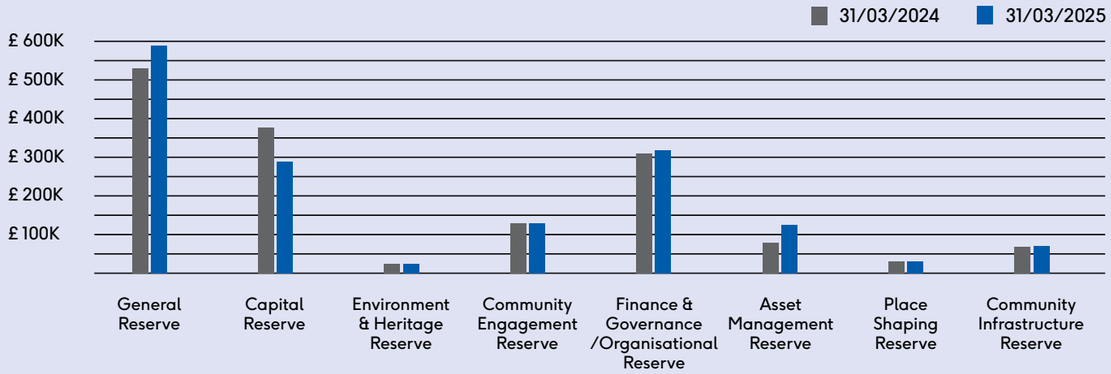
Grants
£16,608

Reserves

Total General Reserves
£589,627 +

Total Designtated Reserves
£971,170 =

Total Reserves
£1,560,797



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SERVING OUR COMMUNITY
Stowmarket
TOWN COUNCIL