

# Lowestoft Town Council Report for 2022/23

The past year has again proven to be a very busy year for Lowestoft Town Council with a large amount of investment in facilities as we continue to make improvements across the assets in your town.

## **Improving Assets**

Lowestoft Town Council is very proud of its parks and open space. The past twelve months have seen new equipment installed at Normanston Park, Fen Park, St Margaret's Plain and Whitton Green (with support from East Suffolk Council) with further improvements currently taking place in Sparrows Nest and Bentley Drive. In the future, improvements to other play areas and parks have been budgeted for with Normanston Park play area, Rosedale Park and Cotman Close all receiving upgrades.

The importance of open spaces on everyone's health and well-being has been highlighted over the past few years and it's with this in mind that the Town Council agreed to continue to provide the use of its facilities for free. This includes the use of its tennis courts, putting green and bowling greens. With the current cost of living crisis, it is hoped that this decision will allow residents and visitors to enjoy our facilities and remain active.

The Marina Theatre has also seen Town Council investment over the past year. A new LED-lighting system was installed which aims to improve the quality and environmental credentials of the Theatre. Continued future investment is also planned to help bring high-quality productions to Lowestoft.

Despite all the investment and provision of facilities, it is disappointing to report on continued vandalism several in park. Repairing the damage from these acts of vandalism take resources away from making improvements elsewhere.

## **Regenerating the Town Hall**

Work on the Town Hall regeneration project continues with a recent public consultation on the designs. The aim of this project has always been to bring the Town Hall back to public use with the people of Lowestoft at its heart. Public consultations and engagement with a range of skilled heritage and design consultants continues to achieve the vision of a regenerated Town Hall that will help to revitalise the Historic High Street and the wider town centre with increased footfall.

## **Enhancing our Environment**

In October 2022, Lowestoft Town Council declared Lowestoft an "Earth Protector Town". This declaration is an extension of the Climate Emergency Declaration made in 2019 and encourages the whole town to be involved as we work together to minimise Lowestoft's environmental impact. Part of the declaration also includes Lowestoft becoming a Plastic Free Community – a status that needs the support from residents, businesses, schools, community groups and organisations to be achieved. More information can be found on the Town Council's website where the whole declaration can be read. Many of the actions from this involve wider engagement with residents, businesses and organisations.

At the start of 2023, the Town Council appointed new Environmental Support Officers (ESOs). The positive effects that this role is having is already being seen with regular litter picks taking place at litter hotspots (such as the Great Eastern Linear Park). This small team of people play an important and visible role in our care for our planet.

The Town Council continues to enhance the environment with new planting taking place around our assets. This has included a new community orchard on land off of The Parklands and additional bulb planting in our parks. The pond at Gainsborough Drive also received much needed dredging this year with work also taking place at Fen Park pond.

## **Events**

Over the year, Lowestoft Town Council has been responsible for organising many successful events in the town. In July 2022, the “People’s Party in the Park” to mark the Platinum Jubilee of HM The Queen was held in collaboration with Royal British Legion.

In September 2022 the “Great Big Green Weekender” was held which highlighted sustainability and environmentally-friendly organisations in Lowestoft. This is an event that we hope will continue to grow as we raise awareness of climate issues. Regular themed markets at the Triangle Market have also been organised with many different stallholders and entertainers helping to create a good atmosphere at these events.

The Town Council is also responsible for many memorial events throughout the year. These include the annual commemorations of Remembrance Sunday and Holocaust Memorial Day, both being very well attended. One-off commemorations were also held as the Town Council marked important anniversaries connected to Lowestoft’s Fishing Heritage with plaques unveiled to commemorate the “Reclaim” and the “Guava” crews.

In September, the country united once again as we mourned the loss of HM The Queen. With this news, responsibility fell to the Town Council, working with many partners, to ensure that the correct protocols were carried out with the proclamation duly read out to the people of Lowestoft on 11 September.

Lowestoft Town Council would like to thank everyone who has been involved in organising and contributing to events over the past year.

## **Supporting and Engaging with the Community**

Lowestoft Town Council aims to listen to the needs of the community it serves, supporting important causes and events. Through our grant awarding scheme, the Town Council has supported a wide range of events and initiatives that bring some benefit to the people of Lowestoft.

Engaging with the community is an important part of the Town Council’s remit. Over the year, the Town Council has asked for public comments on a range of topics – from the Neighbourhood Development Plan proposals to future ideas for the use of the Triangle Market area. There are many opportunities for members of the public to engage with and contribute to the work of the Town Council. If you would like to contribute your views or ideas for consideration, please contact the Town Council via email or telephone.

## **Becoming a Councillor**

In May 2023, local elections will take place and this includes the 20 councillors who make up Lowestoft Town Council. More information on the role of a councillor and how to be nominated can be found on the East Suffolk Council website. If you would like a further discussion about this, please contact us at [admin@lowestofttowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:admin@lowestofttowncouncil.gov.uk)