



# Frome Town Council's Annual Report 2009/2010

**This summary of Frome Town Council's Annual Report informs you of what the Council has achieved in the last year. It is based on the Council's financial year which runs from 1st April 2009 to 31st March 2010. However, it also includes some information based on the civic year which covers the period from May 2009 to April 2010**

The full document is available on request from the Town Office or on [www.frome-tc.gov.uk](http://www.frome-tc.gov.uk) and was approved by the Council on 19 May 2010. It is also available in different formats such as large print, Braille, audio or in a different language; please contact the Town Council office if this is required.

## Services provided by the Town Council

Below are some of the functions of Frome Town Council not described elsewhere on these pages:

- Provides funding for new street lights and reports street light faults to Somerset County Council's contractors
- Provides partnership funding for town CCTV coverage, as part of community safety and anti-social behaviour reduction initiatives with the Community Safety Partnership
- Supports provision of 'Alcohol Restricted Zones', giving police increased powers to tackle anti-social behaviour related to excessive drinking
- Reports blocked drains, overhanging hedges, waste issues, highway faults to the relevant authority on behalf of the town
- Provides member support for committees, forums and working parties; appoints representatives to local organisations and special interest groups
- Lobbies relevant agencies and third parties on issues of the day that are important to the community

### Report from the Mayor 2009-10, Cllr Damon Hooton.

## OH, WHAT A YEAR

It was a great privilege to be Mayor from May 2009 until May 2010.

The vibrancy of Frome shone through in an outstanding year of firsts for Frome and I am sure few will forget seeing our town in the national spotlight.

In September, the Tour of Britain cycle race launched its South West stages in the Market Yard with 10,000 people enjoying a unique spectacle of hundreds of international cyclists racing by. We made a huge national event even better for locals by organising a series of cycling related events as part of the Frome Vélo Jam including the Cobble Wobble which is going on to be an annual event for the town.

In October, the spotlight was trained again on Frome when local resident Mandie Stone persuaded BBC1's 'The One Show' to adopt Frome as its twin town.

Few towns can have to have a prime time TV show focussing on its charms.

In May, my term of office ended with what we think was not only a first for Frome, but also for the country. Using a new power we awarded Jenson Button, MBE "Freedom of the Town" in recognition of his sporting achievements and enhancing the reputation of the town and the country. The award ceremony took place on 4th May 2010.

The Town Council has also been looking to consolidate information services for residents of and visitors to Frome.



With the threatened closure of the Frome Tourist Information Centre in March, the Council agreed to undertake the development of an entirely new Council service for the benefit of Frome residents, businesses and visitors.

From April the Council's Palmer Street public reception closed and a Town Council One Stop Information Shop in the iconic Round Tower in the centre of town opened to deal with both Council and tourism related queries.

The Town Council's Annual Report is an impressive document showing local residents what we do with your money. And by working with you we're all succeeding in continuing to "make Frome a better place".

### Planning and Economic Development Committee

#### Consultation Responses

Frome Town Council is a statutory consultee and receives copies of all planning applications submitted to Mendip District Council within the Parish of Frome.

Between April 2009 and March 2010 the Planning Committee has considered 290 applications; only 12 of the final decisions issued by Mendip District Council went against the recommendation of Frome Town Council.

#### Town Entry Signs

Last year we replaced all of the town entry signs. They now include the crest of all three of our twin towns together with St Aldhelm and acknowledge that Frome is a Fairtrade town.

#### Litter and Dog Waste Bins

The Planning Committee has a budget to provide litter bin and dog waste bins within the town. At the request of residents it provided two new litter bins and six new dog waste bins last year. If you would like to propose another please get in touch.

PICTURED: 2009-10 Mayor Councillor Damon Hooton next to one of the new signs.



### Policy and Finance Committee Report

**This Committee is responsible for strategic policy, risk management and internal controls, structures and processes, community focus and standards of conduct.**

All Councillors fed into the Strategic Plan that directs the work of the Council which is reviewed regularly by the Policy and Finance Committee.

Under the umbrella of the Strategic Plan, perhaps the key role of this committee is that it identifies and proposes to Council the size of the precept and the way that money will be spent.

Frome Town Council does not receive any revenue support from central government, unlike the County and District Councils; neither does it receive any funding from local businesses and retailers via their payment of the non-domestic rate.

By law, all money that is disseminated by the Town Council has to be spent in the town to benefit the local community.

#### What we do with your money?

**Frome Town Council calculates the budget it needs for the next financial year based on planned income and expenditure, capital projects planned and the amount of reserves it holds. The table on the right is a summary of budget expenditure for this year and the year ahead.**

General reserves are needed to protect the Town Council from unexpected demands on expenditure or unexpected reductions in income. They operate so that the Council can continue to cover its commitments.

Frome Town Council (2009-10) 2009/10 budget & expenditure summary & 2010/11 budget			
	Agreed Budget 2009-10	Actual YTD 2009-10	Next Year Budget 2010-11
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Corporate Management .....	171,881	58,728	169,090
Democratic Representation & Management incl Civic Affairs .....	88,745	93,062	95,402
Funding of Outside Bodies & Community Grants .....	129,215	129,427	131,438
Christmas Lights & Christmas Spectacular .....	37,260	33,662	37,154
Capital Expenditure & Projects incl Loan Repayments .....	110,943	117,985	223,444
Grounds & Property Maintenance incl Floral Displays .....	213,428	193,102	223,353
Planning & Economic Development .....	49,089	44,246	49,498
Asset Management Revenue Account .....		-44,056	
Gross Expenditure.....	800,561	626,156	929,379
Income.....	18,777	23,503	34,765
Reserves .....	4,996	-174,137	117,826
Precept.....	776,788	776,788	776,788

#### Grants and support to community organisations

Every year the Town Council supports and provides grant aid to organisations in the town. In 2009/2010 this support was just over £167,000.

Of this, the Cheese and Grain, the biggest concert hall in this part of the country, received £35,000 towards its running costs as well as a rent free community building that the Town Council has restored and continues to pay for. In total last year, the Town Council paid £82,900 towards keeping this great resource up and running and providing to the people of Frome something rather special.

We also provided essential funding to the Frome Tourist Information Centre, the Citi-

zens Advice Bureau, the Police Community Support Officers, the Merlin Theatre, the Frome Festival, school crossing patrols, CCTV and many other organisations in the town. A full list of grants given to local organisations in 2009/2010 can be found on the website.

#### Town Twinning

In 2009 Rabka-Zdrój in Poland was welcomed alongside Château Gontier in France and Murrhardt in Germany as twin towns of Frome.

Building bridges with other cultures and searching for mutually beneficial ways of working together is as important now as it was when the concept was developed in the immediate post war years.

### Recreation and Properties Committee

#### ALLOTMENTS



Public demand for allotments is still high and the Allotment Society and the Town Council are working together to increase the number of plots by reducing the size of some of the plots, clearing some of the more "neglected" sites and putting back into production old disused plots. We continue to search for new sites too.

#### FLORAL DISPLAYS

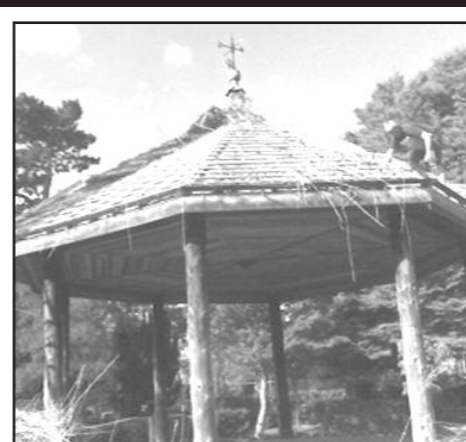
In 2009 we entered South West in Bloom for the first time in a number of years and gained, with our red, white and blue floral displays, a respectable bronze medal. The Allotment Society and Friends of Frome went on to win a community award which was presented by the Mayor. Along with beautiful hanging baskets and planters, a new floral display bed was constructed on North Parade.

#### VICTORIA PARK

2009/10 saw the completion of the refurbishment of the tennis courts and replacement of the fence while the tearoom restoration was completed and opened early in August.

The new-look tearooms provide not only a focal point for the park, particularly as all sports equipment is hired from the café, but it is bringing a range of new people into the park using it as a place to relax and enjoy tea and cakes in a beautiful green environment.

A wide range of new trees and shrubs have been planted to give the park much needed colour throughout the seasons and the last of the overgrown shrubbery was removed. Work has started on refurbishing original park benches and other structures. The bandstand was re-thatched and fire-proofed and a weather vane added.



#### MARY BAILY PLAYING FIELD

An extensive process of repairs and renewal has been undertaken including new pathways, gates, play equipment and a general overhaul of all existing equipment including the refurbishment of the ever popular zip line.

The equipment is regularly checked by registered safety inspectors and any repairs carried out as required to ensure the safety and longevity of the equipment.

New concrete street scene style skate equipment was installed in April and the area has seen a significant increase in usage ever since.



### Christmas Spectacular

The Town Council continued to improve the Christmas Spectacular with additional decorations and attractions such as live Reindeer and synthetic skate rink. Changing the event from three hours on a Friday evening to a Sunday afternoon has proved popular as has the link with the churches' Advent Procession. This has also reduced alcohol related anti-social behaviour. It continues to be an important part of the Frome Calendar.

#### WHO ARE WE?

#### TOWN COUNCIL MEMBERS

The Town Council has 17 Town Councillors elected for a term of four years. The next Town Council elections will be in May 2011. Anyone with an interest in the town can stand. Contact the Town Office for more information. The town is split into six areas, known as wards.

#### TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS

All Council and Committee meetings are open to the public to attend. On every agenda there is always an opportunity for members of the public to speak and make comments. The Town Council meets approximately five times a year and has three main Committees. One of them, the Policy and Finance Committee, has four Sub Committees. These Committees make decisions under their remitted powers or make recommendations for ratification by Full Council.

#### WHERE ARE WE?

**The Town Council reception is based at the Round Tower in the Black Swan complex in Bridge St, adjacent to the Cattle Market car park.**

The opening hours are 10.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Saturday. We provide comprehensive information and if we are not able to help you directly we should be able to put you in touch with someone who can.

**The Round Tower, 2 Bridge St, Frome, BA11 1BB, Tel: 01373 465757, Fax: 01373 451733, Email: [admin@frome-tc.gov.uk](mailto:admin@frome-tc.gov.uk)**