

Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee Meeting of Witney Town Council



Monday, 16th March, 2026 at 6.00 pm

To members of the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee - R Crouch, J Robertshaw, R Smith, O Collins, A Bailey, G Doughty, D Temple and J Treloar (and all other Town Councillors for information).

You are hereby summonsed to the above meeting to be held in the **Gallery Room, The Corn Exchange, Witney** for the transaction of the business stated in the agenda below.

Admission to Meetings

All Council meetings are open to the public and press unless otherwise stated.

Numbers of the public will be limited, with priority given to those who have registered to speak on an item on the agenda. Any member of the public wishing to attend the meeting should contact the Committee Clerk derek.mackenzie@witney-tc.gov.uk in advance.

Recording of Meetings

In accordance with the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, public meetings may be filmed, audio-recorded, or photographed. Anyone intending to record the proceedings is asked, as a courtesy, to inform the Committee Clerk before the meeting begins.

This meeting will be broadcast live via Microsoft Teams and recorded; by attending or participating, you consent to the recording and public sharing of audio and video, which may be made available for later viewing. For details on how personal data is handled, please see the [Privacy Notice](#)

To view the meeting please follow: [Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee | Meeting-Join | Microsoft Teams](#)

Agenda

1. Apologies for Absence

To consider apologies and reasons for absence.

Committee Members who are unable to attend the meeting should notify the Committee Clerk derek.mackenzie@witney-tc.gov.uk **prior to the meeting**, stating the reason for absence.

Standing Order 8(e)(v) permits the appointment of substitute Councillors to a Committee whose role is replace ordinary Councillors at a meeting of a Committee if ordinary Councillors of the Committee have confirmed to the Proper Officer **before** the meeting that they are unable to attend.

2. Declarations of Interest

Members are reminded to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests in any of the items under consideration at this meeting in accordance with the Town Council's code of conduct.

3. Minutes (Pages 4 - 7)

a) To receive and consider the minutes of the Halls, Cemeteries and Allotments Committee held on 19 January 2026;

b) Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda (Questions on the progress any item).

4. **Public Participation**

The meeting will adjourn for this item

Members of the public may speak for a maximum of **five minutes** each during the period of public participation, in line with Standing Order 25. Matters raised shall relate to the following items on the agenda.

5. **Finance Report** (Pages 8 - 21)

To receive and consider the report of the R.F.O concerning the financial position of items under the remit of this Committee.

Public Halls

6. **Public Halls Report** (Pages 22 - 26)

To receive and consider the report of the Venue & Events Officer.

7. **Corn Exchange Business Report** (Pages 27 - 33)

To receive and consider the report of the Venue & Events Officer

8. **Proposal to improve Bin Storage Area at Thorney Leys shops** (Page 34)

To note correspondence from Publica regarding a proposal to improve a bin storage area at Thorney Leys, opposite Burwell Hall, on land owned by Witney Town Council, and to consider granting approval in principle, subject to the necessary licencing arrangements along with confirmation of the precise location, associated costs, and agreement on future maintenance and liability.

Cemeteries & Closed Churchyards

9. **Friends of the Cemeteries**

To receive the notes of the Friends of the Cemeteries meeting held 11 March 2026.
(TO FOLLOW)



Town Clerk

Agenda Item 3

HALLS, CEMETERIES & ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Held on Monday, 19 January 2026

At 6.00 pm in the Gallery Room, The Corn Exchange, Witney

Present:

Councillor R Crouch (Chair)

Councillors:	J Treloar J Robertshaw A Bailey	G Doughty D Temple J Aitman (In place of O Collins)
Officers:	Adam Clapton Derek Mackenzie Thomas Davies	Deputy Town Clerk Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk Deputy Venue & Events Officer
Others:	None	

H32 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Smith and O Collins, for whom Councillor J Aitman attended as a substitute.

H33 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members or Officers.

H34 MINUTES

That, the minutes of the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee meeting held on 10 November 2025 were received.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee meeting held on 10 November 2025 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the Chair.

H35 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

H36 **PUBLIC HALLS REPORT**

The Committee received and considered a detailed report from the Venue & Events Manager.

Bar Hire Policy – Private Hire Events

The Committee discussed at length the introduction of a proposed cost-based bar hire policy, which comprised of two options for private hirers.

Members noted that the proposed policy was focused on loss prevention rather than profit generation, with the primary aim of protecting the Council from subsidising private events and reducing financial risk. It was highlighted that the existing £50 flat fee no longer reflected the true cost of operating a bar service.

The Committee welcomed the transparency of the two options presented, considering them a fair and proportionate approach to address the variety of usage at both the Corn Exchange and Burwell Hall. Members noted that the policy would help support the proposal to increase booking volumes, particularly at Burwell Hall, while ensuring that the Council was protected from potential losses.

It was further noted that hirers would retain the option not to use the bar, and that the policy would be subject to review to assess its effectiveness.

With regard to community and charity events, the Venue & Events Manager explained that four options were presented within the report for consideration. A Member highlighted that charities come in various sizes and that the policy should be fair to all. It was also noted that smaller charities and community groups may continue to benefit from the opportunity to apply to the Council for a subsidised let. The Committee were unanimous in agreement with proceeding with Option two meaning that the Council would equally bear the risk of losses with the community groups.

Cancellation Policy Review

The Committee reviewed the existing cancellation policy, which had been in operation for over twelve months. It was noted that the policy had been applied successfully with no complaints being recorded and that the policy would continue to be monitored by Officers.

1863 Café – Local Art Display Proposal

The Committee considered a proposal to use wall space in the café for the display of local artwork. Members broadly supported the principle and emphasised that the scheme should be kept simple, with arrangements that were easy for staff to manage. The display should maintain accessibility for emerging and young artists, with a limited display period to ensure that no single artist dominates the space.

It was suggested that artists could be asked to offer an honest commission on any sales, perhaps in the range of 10–20%, rather than charging any fee to display.

Members agreed that a draft policy should be prepared by officers for consideration, and that they should structure this in a similar way to the community window initiative.

Recommended:

1. That, the Minimum spend policy for private event hires be approved with a review in six months and
2. That, Option two be adopted for charity and local community events, applying a 50% cost-based staffing charge for bar provision and,
3. That the cancellation policy remains appropriate, and no changes are required and
4. That, the 1863 Local Art Display scheme be approved and officers draft a policy for further consideration

H37 **CORN EXCHANGE BUSINESS REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Venue & Events Officer

Members were informed by the Deputy Town Clerk that the use of the word “obligation” in the second paragraph of the report had been raised by a member of the public. While the provision of an arts facility was not a statutory duty of the Council, the Town Council was obliged to provide it in respect of the funding received from West Oxfordshire District Council towards the renovation of the Corn Exchange.

Members welcomed the report on the café and bar, noting a significant year-on-year increase in takings, as well as the positive feedback received from recent events, including the Advent Fayre and Christmas afternoon teas.

Members congratulated officers and staff on the success of recent events and the ongoing improvements at the Corn Exchange.

Resolved:

That the report and verbal updates be noted.

H38 **WAA - REQUEST TO INSTALL RAISED BEDS AT LAKESIDE ALLOTMENTS**

The Committee considered a request from the Witney Allotment Association for funding to install raised beds to improve accessibility at Lakeside allotments which would also help to reduce the waiting list.

Members supported the principle of improving accessibility and agreed in principle that practical solutions should be explored, particularly given the flooding issues at Lakeside. However, they noted concerns regarding the wide cost range quoted and requested that Officers obtain a more detailed, itemised cost breakdown from the Allotments Association so as the proposed expenditure could be assessed alongside the long-term value for money and potential return on the investment

Members heard that the costs could be met from the existing Allotments Ear Marked Reserve.

Resolved:

That officers seek further detailed costings and additional information from the Lakeside Allotments Group before a decision is made on the proposal.

The meeting closed at: 7.07 pm

Chair

HALLS, CEMETERIES & ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE



Agenda Item: Finance Report
Meeting Date: Monday 16 March 2026
Contact Officer: Responsible Financial Officer

Should Members have any queries about this report advance notice would be appreciated, in writing, by 12 noon on Friday 13 March to allow for a full response at the meeting.

Background

Detailed income and expenditure statements for budgets which are the responsibility of this committee are enclosed. The period to which this report relates is 1 April 2025 to 31 December 2025.

Current Situation

Management accounts

The Council has appointed five standing committees which have delegated powers to make decisions, including financial decisions, regarding the services which are included within their terms of reference, subject to the committee having the necessary budget. The Council's coding system and management accounts reflect the committee structure.

Within each committee, there are individual **cost centres**, comprising three digits, typically representing a discrete service entity, to which income and expenditure is allocated against previously agreed revenue budgets.

The cost centres for which this committee has **responsibility** are:

agreed revenue budgets.

Cost centre	Service
103	Bars
104	Corn Exchange
105	Burwell Hall
106	Madley Park Community Centre
301	Tower Hill Cemetery
302	Windrush Cemetery
303	Closed churchyards – St Mary's/ Holy Trinity
305	Allotments

Within each cost centre income and expenditure is then allocated to a four-digit nominal ledger code; these codes are common across the cost centres. Nominal ledger codes further define the costs associated with the cost centre and correspond to a specific type of account, such as materials or staffing costs. Codes commencing with “1” are income codes; codes commencing with “3” or “4” are expenditure codes.

The format of this report is straightforward; the first two columns relate to the original budget from 2024/25 against the actual figures for last year. The middle columns relate to the current year’s original budget, actual expenditure year to date, the projected budget to 31 March 2026, based on the estimates agreed during the budget cycle. The right-hand columns relate to the agreed estimates for 2026/27.

A full review of the budgetary position was undertaken during the budget cycle. This received detailed consideration at the last meeting of this committee and the subsequent Policy Governance and Finance Committee and full Council meetings. The RFO would refer members to the finance/ budget reports which were approved at those meetings for further information.

Members may wish to note the following:

1. There will be some codes where the year-to-date figure now exceeds the projected for the whole year. This is to be expected as the projections were the best estimates made in September/ October and clearly matters move on. Equally there will be other codes where not all the projected budgets will be required. Virements (transfers) between budgets will be made where these can be justified but overall there are no budget lines which cause concern.
2. In relation to the 1863 Café/bar sales were revised upwards from £182,638 to £210,900 during the budget cycle, with sales to 31 December 2025 at £164,874 (90% of original budget and 78% of revised budget). At the same time the net cost of the facility was revised downwards from £28,556 to £24,047. This now looks rather cautious as the position to 31 December 2025 was more favourable at £11,296 net cost. Note also that no in-year adjustment has been made for stock and this should further improve the position.
3. The Council has agreed a delegation to the Town Clerk/CEO to opt-to-tax the Burwell Hall (cost centre 105) if it was considered necessary in terms of input VAT recovery. However following further review this is not considered necessary at this point in relation to current capital works. The position is due for review early in the new financial year and will consider planned projects in relation to the Burwell Hall. Members will also recall that if an option-to-tax is made then it was agreed that the output tax would be absorbed by the Council so that the additional 20% cost would not be passed on to customers, the vast majority of which are not VAT-registered organisations.

4. Members are reminded of the change in relation to the treatment of property budgets. Previously where a property was leased out this was represented in the accounts against the site where the property was located.

For this Committee this impacts on the Cemetery Lodge rent and insurance recharge, previously shown under the Tower Hill cemetery budget (301). The rationale for the change is that the previous treatment inadvertently had the impact of distorting revenue budgets such as cc301 because in this case none of the expenditure in this cost centre related to this property. In governance terms it should also be noted that whilst clearly spending committees have an interest, property matters in relation to leases etc are primarily a matter for the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee (PGF). Consequently a new cost centre – 501 was created under PGF and this will consolidate all rented property income and expenditure.

The Langdale Hall (cc102) and Madley Park Hall (cc106) are in a very similar position and have also been transferred to cc501.

Current year budgets were vired from the old budget lines to the new cost centre 501 which has the impact of ensuring that like for like comparisons may more readily be made between 2025-26 and 2026-27.

5. Energy costs are significant part of this Committee's expenditure. These are likely to rise as a result of the war in the Middle East. However there will be no adverse impact on the Council's energy budgets for 2026-27 insofar as this Committee's services are concerned as your officers placed a contract with the Council's current energy providers on 2 March 2026 based on contract sums offered prior to the start of the war. However the volatility of another major war will likely cause significant inflationary pressures as the situation unfolds.
6. The Committee's services are operating within agreed budgets – the original budget for 2025/26 was revised down from £515,765 to £449,348 during the budget cycle and net expenditure to 31 December 2025 was £300,771 (58% of original and 67% of revised budget).

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality – no implications directly resulting from this report.
- b) Biodiversity - no implications directly resulting from this report.
- c) Crime & Disorder - no implications directly resulting from this report.

d) Environment & Climate Emergency - no implications directly resulting from this report.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should consider any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

The provision of regular financial reports is part of the Council's risk management system.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates. Social value is not quantified in the financial reports but clearly the creation of social value is dependent on setting adequate budgets to meet the Council's objectives.

Financial implications

This report forms part of the Council's due diligence and a process in line with its Financial Regulations. The financial implications are detailed above and also in the attached appendices.

This report forms part of the Council's mechanisms for budgetary control, as it enables income and expenditure incurred to be reviewed and to be compared with the Council's budgets.

Recommendations

Members are invited to approve the report and the management accounts of the Committee's services to 31 December 2025.

Annual Budget - By Committee (Actual YTD Month 9)

Note: Management accounts - year to 31 December 2025 - Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Ctte, 16 March 2026

		<u>Last Year 2024-25</u>		<u>Current Year 2025-26</u>				<u>Estimate 2026-27</u>		
		Budget	Actual	Total	Actual YTD	Projected	Committed	Agreed	EMR	Carried Forward
<u>Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments</u>										
103	<u>BAR/ CAFE</u>									
1000	C/EX. 1863 - SALES ALCOHOL	34,736	28,915	37,500	30,487	37,750	0	41,075	0	0
1001	C/EX. 1863 SALES - FOOD	28,660	36,511	35,700	34,703	44,375	0	48,280	0	0
1002	C/EX. 1863 BAR HIRE CHARGE	1,430	1,107	1,055	650	750	0	1,095	0	0
1003	C/EX. 1863 SALES - SOFT DRINKS	7,064	9,211	9,030	9,230	12,450	0	13,550	0	0
1009	CORN EX.1863 CAFE- HOT DRINKS	74,800	99,374	96,000	88,093	112,100	0	121,975	0	0
1014	EVENTS INCOME	0	217	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1090	BURWELL HALL BAR - ALL DRINKS	6,600	1,413	3,200	1,710	3,325	0	3,600	0	0
1091	BURWELL HALL BAR HIRE CHARGE	150	-100	153	0	150	0	159	0	0
	Total Income	153,440	176,648	182,638	164,874	210,900	0	229,734	0	0
3000	BAR PURCHASES - DRINK	21,000	18,056	22,875	20,454	21,675	0	23,575	0	0
3001	BAR PURCHASES - FOOD	17,196	20,970	21,420	19,521	26,625	0	28,975	0	0
3009	CAFE PURCHASES - HOT BEVERAGES	19,448	23,558	24,000	19,203	28,025	0	30,500	0	0
3010	PROMOTIONS	0	2,668	4,450	5,143	6,100	0	6,400	0	0
	Direct Expenditure	57,644	65,252	72,745	64,320	82,425	0	89,450	0	0
4001	SALARIES	105,307	113,561	107,000	86,877	117,490	0	124,745	0	0
4002	ER'S NIC	4,566	6,704	9,900	7,562	10,185	0	10,600	0	0
4003	ER'S SUPERANN	5,124	6,587	7,000	6,313	11,275	0	14,850	0	0
4007	PROTECTIVE CLOTHING	750	21	500	0	250	0	250	0	0
4016	CLEANING MATERIALS	100	73	100	177	160	0	160	0	0
4032	PUBLICITY	0	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4038	OTHER MAINTENANCE	500	0	500	125	250	0	250	0	0

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Appendix

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Annual Budget - By Committee (Actual YTD Month 9)

Note: Management accounts - year to 31 December 2025 - Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Ctte, 16 March 2026

		<u>Last Year 2024-25</u>		<u>Current Year 2025-26</u>				<u>Estimate 2026-27</u>		
		Budget	Actual	Total	Actual YTD	Projected	Committed	Agreed	EMR	Carried Forward
4042	EQUIPMENT INC. FURNITURE	5,000	6,018	5,000	4,990	5,500	0	4,000	0	0
4059	OTHER PROF FEES	700	600	700	450	600	0	600	0	0
4099	MISCELLANEOUS	1,000	309	1,000	605	300	0	300	0	0
4892	C/S STAFF RCHG	4,608	6,578	5,339	3,719	5,208	0	5,079	0	0
4893	C/S O'HEAD RCHG	1,304	1,612	1,410	1,031	1,304	0	1,454	0	0
Overhead Expenditure		128,959	142,077	138,449	111,849	152,522	0	162,288	0	0
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve		(33,163)	(30,681)	(28,556)	(11,296)	(24,047)		(22,004)		
104	<u>CORN EXCHANGE</u>									
1007	CORN EXCHNGE LETTING	57,314	64,006	68,000	48,351	62,000	0	68,000	0	0
1014	EVENTS INCOME	13,609	7,942	13,881	13,646	16,200	0	18,000	0	0
1015	TEA DANCE INCOME	2,400	2,743	2,400	2,463	3,300	0	3,300	0	0
1016	FUNCTION REFRESHMENT	0	0	0	50	50	0	0	0	0
1017	CORN EXCHANGE WEDDING LETTING	1,353	2,962	1,400	0	1,050	0	2,200	0	0
1052	EXPENSES RECOVERED	3,479	0	750	1,471	1,729	0	650	0	0
Total Income		78,155	77,654	86,431	65,982	84,329	0	92,150	0	0
4001	SALARIES	78,384	75,017	65,544	56,249	75,560	0	82,632	0	0
4002	ER'S NIC	5,927	6,365	7,342	6,356	8,022	0	9,533	0	0
4003	ER'S SUPERANN	12,971	11,837	9,811	7,123	11,388	0	15,575	0	0
4007	PROTECTIVE CLOTHING	300	154	300	83	150	0	200	0	0
4008	TRAINING	1,000	3,462	1,020	1,302	1,020	0	1,020	0	0
4011	RATES	1,244	1,282	3,167	2,897	3,219	0	4,043	0	0
4012	WATER RATES	2,700	6,559	5,075	1,620	4,920	0	5,665	0	0
4014	ELECTRICITY	16,792	13,662	12,000	8,227	13,895	0	14,500	0	0

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Annual Budget - By Committee (Actual YTD Month 9)

Note: Management accounts - year to 31 December 2025 - Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Ctte, 16 March 2026

		<u>Last Year 2024-25</u>		<u>Current Year 2025-26</u>				<u>Estimate 2026-27</u>		
		Budget	Actual	Total	Actual YTD	Projected	Committed	Agreed	EMR	Carried Forward
4015	GAS	8,987	9,339	8,000	2,496	8,500	0	8,900	0	0
4016	CLEANING MATERIALS	2,000	2,655	2,040	2,182	2,800	0	2,800	0	0
4017	CONTRACT CLEAN/WASTE	3,735	1,560	3,735	1,467	2,200	0	2,700	0	0
4018	PHOTOCOPIER COSTS	50	166	190	83	130	0	170	0	0
4021	TELEPHONE/FAX	960	1,697	1,260	1,125	1,550	0	1,600	0	0
4025	INSURANCE	1,126	930	950	977	977	0	1,350	0	0
4028	I.T.	1,400	1,698	1,500	1,854	2,100	0	2,100	0	0
4030	RECRUITMENT ADVT'G	1,000	0	1,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
4032	PUBLICITY	3,000	1,035	3,000	1,244	2,000	0	2,000	0	0
4036	PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	8,000	12,175	12,000	7,836	11,000	0	12,000	0	0
4038	OTHER MAINTENANCE	4,000	7,086	4,000	3,844	4,000	0	4,000	0	0
4042	EQUIPMENT INC. FURNITURE	2,000	2,239	2,000	417	1,000	0	1,500	0	0
4043	SMALL TOOLS & EQUIPT	150	34	150	120	150	0	150	0	0
4045	LICENCES	2,500	2,590	2,900	1,377	2,700	0	2,800	0	0
4048	ENG.INSPEC.(VARIABLE)	373	364	370	473	473	0	490	0	0
4064	HEALTH & SAFETY	100	420	100	52	100	0	100	0	0
4141	EVENTS	10,000	10,036	10,000	13,313	14,400	0	15,500	0	0
4142	TEA DANCE COSTS	6,535	5,709	6,700	3,405	6,000	0	6,300	0	0
4144	FILM CLUB	4,481	3,551	4,600	2,267	1,850	0	1,940	0	0
4888	O/S STAFF RECHARGE	3,856	5,684	5,000	3,546	7,298	0	5,572	0	0
4890	O/S O'HEAD RECHARGE	354	567	326	238	535	0	329	0	0
4892	C/S STAFF RCHG	9,215	13,159	10,677	7,438	10,416	0	10,158	0	0
4893	C/S O'HEAD RCHG	2,607	3,101	2,820	2,058	2,608	0	2,908	0	0
4899	DEPOT REALLOCATION	703	1,141	711	652	1,101	0	826	0	0
Overhead Expenditure		196,450	205,275	188,288	142,316	202,062	0	219,361	0	0

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Annual Budget - By Committee (Actual YTD Month 9)

Note: Management accounts - year to 31 December 2025 - Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Ctte, 16 March 2026

		<u>Last Year 2024-25</u>		<u>Current Year 2025-26</u>				<u>Estimate 2026-27</u>		
		Budget	Actual	Total	Actual YTD	Projected	Committed	Agreed	EMR	Carried Forward
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve		<u>(118,295)</u>	<u>(127,621)</u>	<u>(101,857)</u>	<u>(76,334)</u>	<u>(117,733)</u>		<u>(127,211)</u>		
105	BURWELL HALL									
1005	BURWELL HALL LETTING	30,575	28,681	31,200	22,104	29,000	0	33,000	0	0
1052	EXPENSES RECOVERED	2,189	0	750	829	950	0	350	0	0
	Total Income	32,764	28,681	31,950	22,934	29,950	0	33,350	0	0
4001	SALARIES	52,256	59,252	46,804	31,000	42,294	0	47,959	0	0
4002	ER'S NIC	3,951	5,106	4,925	3,645	4,767	0	5,651	0	0
4003	ER'S SUPERANN	8,647	8,785	5,744	5,047	7,432	0	8,875	0	0
4007	PROTECTIVE CLOTHING	300	0	300	0	150	0	150	0	0
4008	TRAINING	500	0	500	0	0	0	250	0	0
4011	RATES	839	865	2,150	1,940	2,156	0	2,708	0	0
4012	WATER RATES	420	909	825	403	650	0	680	0	0
4014	ELECTRICITY	3,362	2,987	2,500	1,195	2,800	0	2,900	0	0
4015	GAS	8,567	2,322	4,146	1,075	3,250	0	3,400	0	0
4016	CLEANING MATERIALS	2,000	2,213	2,050	1,716	2,000	0	2,000	0	0
4017	CONTRACT CLEAN/WASTE	1,225	3,281	2,800	2,812	3,600	0	3,725	0	0
4021	TELEPHONE/FAX	268	235	260	332	400	0	285	0	0
4025	INSURANCE	592	437	445	459	459	0	625	0	0
4028	I.T.	1,000	1,494	1,000	1,158	1,550	0	1,550	0	0
4032	PUBLICITY	1,000	330	1,000	0	500	0	500	0	0
4036	PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	5,000	4,576	5,000	2,603	2,500	0	5,000	0	0
4038	OTHER MAINTENANCE	2,100	1,885	1,825	1,075	1,000	0	1,000	0	0
4042	EQUIPMENT INC. FURNITURE	1,500	378	1,500	749	1,500	0	1,500	0	0
4045	LICENCES	477	475	485	512	512	0	530	0	0

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Annual Budget - By Committee (Actual YTD Month 9)

Note: Management accounts - year to 31 December 2025 - Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Ctte, 16 March 2026

		<u>Last Year 2024-25</u>		<u>Current Year 2025-26</u>				<u>Estimate 2026-27</u>		
		Budget	Actual	Total	Actual YTD	Projected	Committed	Agreed	EMR	Carried Forward
4048	ENG.INSPEC.(VARIABLE)	340	1,790	1,825	335	335	0	350	0	0
4064	HEALTH & SAFETY	0	498	0	404	404	0	0	0	0
4099	MISCELLANEOUS	0	54	200	0	100	0	100	0	0
4142	TEA DANCE COSTS	0	113	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4888	O/S STAFF RECHARGE	19,324	2,020	5,000	4,316	8,768	0	5,572	0	0
4890	O/S O'HEAD RECHARGE	1,773	159	326	337	643	0	329	0	0
4892	C/S STAFF RCHG	4,608	4,456	5,339	3,717	5,204	0	5,075	0	0
4893	C/S O'HEAD RCHG	1,304	1,549	1,410	1,031	1,303	0	1,453	0	0
4899	DEPOT REALLOCATION	3,524	478	711	320	1,323	0	826	0	0
	Overhead Expenditure	124,877	106,648	99,070	66,182	95,600	0	102,993	0	0
	105 Net Income over Expenditure	-92,113	-77,967	-67,120	-43,249	-65,650	0	-69,643	0	0
6000	plus Transfer from EMR	0	1,940	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(92,113)	(76,027)	(67,120)	(43,249)	(65,650)		(69,643)		
301	TOWER HILL CEMETERY									
1050	RENT RECEIVED	13,260	13,620	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1060	INSURANCE RECOVERED	194	262	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1099	MISCELLANEOUS INCOME	0	183	0	31	31	0	0	0	0
1100	BURIAL FEES	9,283	9,284	8,850	7,428	10,175	0	9,965	0	0
1101	GRANT OF RIGHTS	2,828	1,060	1,200	720	1,200	0	1,040	0	0
1102	INTERMENT OF ASHES	12,324	17,596	13,000	6,880	11,750	0	14,600	0	0
1105	MEMORIAL FEES	5,692	5,771	6,500	3,543	5,400	0	5,600	0	0
1106	MEMORIAL PLAQUES	323	594	500	251	500	0	520	0	0
1108	CHAPEL FEES	384	508	450	132	400	0	450	0	0
	Total Income	44,288	48,876	30,500	18,984	29,456	0	32,175	0	0

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Annual Budget - By Committee (Actual YTD Month 9)

Note: Management accounts - year to 31 December 2025 - Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Ctte, 16 March 2026

		<u>Last Year 2024-25</u>		<u>Current Year 2025-26</u>				<u>Estimate 2026-27</u>		
		Budget	Actual	Total	Actual YTD	Projected	Committed	Agreed	EMR	Carried Forward
4001	SALARIES	14,639	14,621	15,602	10,512	13,818	0	15,548	0	0
4002	ER'S NIC	1,193	1,306	1,915	1,280	1,738	0	1,894	0	0
4003	ER'S SUPERANN	3,177	3,173	3,385	2,281	3,000	0	3,076	0	0
4011	RATES	4,046	3,792	3,850	3,413	3,792	0	3,936	0	0
4012	WATER RATES	365	1,689	850	356	1,700	0	1,800	0	0
4014	ELECTRICITY	1,118	894	900	91	900	0	900	0	0
4016	CLEANING MATERIALS	30	0	30	0	30	0	30	0	0
4017	CONTRACT CLEAN/WASTE	1,000	1,325	1,500	1,250	1,600	0	1,700	0	0
4025	INSURANCE	435	0	445	274	274	0	375	0	0
4028	I.T.	0	0	0	309	309	0	0	0	0
4036	PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	6,000	7,466	6,000	6,428	7,250	0	7,000	0	0
4038	OTHER MAINTENANCE	0	52	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4041	EQUIPMENT HIRE	0	0	400	200	400	0	400	0	0
4042	EQUIPMENT INC. FURNITURE	100	178	100	0	50	0	100	0	0
4059	OTHER PROF FEES	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
4064	HEALTH & SAFETY	100	0	102	0	100	0	100	0	0
4099	MISCELLANEOUS	0	195	200	105	200	0	200	0	0
4110	LETTINGS - NO CHARGE/SUBSID'D	200	0	200	0	0	0	0	0	0
4350	PLAQUES PURCHASED	291	326	605	201	400	0	400	0	0
4355	MEMORIAL MAINTENANCE	2,500	1,400	2,000	670	1,000	0	1,800	0	0
4888	O/S STAFF RECHARGE	80,770	78,495	110,000	53,420	83,506	0	122,580	0	0
4890	O/S O'HEAD RECHARGE	10,846	8,710	7,164	3,385	6,126	0	7,243	0	0
4892	C/S STAFF RCHG	13,823	13,369	16,017	11,158	15,626	0	15,239	0	0
4893	C/S O'HEAD RCHG	3,911	4,650	4,230	3,088	3,913	0	4,363	0	0

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Annual Budget - By Committee (Actual YTD Month 9)

Note: Management accounts - year to 31 December 2025 - Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Ctte, 16 March 2026

		<u>Last Year 2024-25</u>		<u>Current Year 2025-26</u>				<u>Estimate 2026-27</u>		
		Budget	Actual	Total	Actual YTD	Projected	Committed	Agreed	EMR	Carried Forward
4899	DEPOT REALLOCATION	13,092	16,714	15,643	10,481	12,603	0	18,171	0	0
	Overhead Expenditure	157,636	158,356	191,238	108,902	158,335	0	206,855	0	0
	301 Net Income over Expenditure	-113,348	-109,480	-160,738	-89,918	-128,879	0	-174,680	0	0
6000	plus Transfer from EMR	0	1,427	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>(113,348)</u>	<u>(108,053)</u>	<u>(160,738)</u>	<u>(89,918)</u>	<u>(128,879)</u>		<u>(174,680)</u>		
302	<u>WINDRUSH CEMETERY</u>									
1100	BURIAL FEES	22,338	19,481	22,785	16,341	22,785	0	23,651	0	0
1101	GRANT OF RIGHTS	27,091	21,261	27,633	21,253	30,000	0	28,683	0	0
1102	INTERMENT OF ASHES	5,288	3,642	5,394	3,253	5,100	0	5,599	0	0
1105	MEMORIAL FEES	7,448	6,028	7,597	3,609	5,600	0	7,886	0	0
1106	MEMORIAL PLAQUES	0	212	0	195	93	0	0	0	0
	Total Income	62,165	50,624	63,409	44,650	63,578	0	65,819	0	0
4001	SALARIES	14,639	14,621	14,932	10,512	13,818	0	15,548	0	0
4002	ER'S NIC	1,193	1,306	1,217	1,280	1,738	0	1,894	0	0
4003	ER'S SUPERANN	3,177	3,173	3,241	2,281	3,000	0	3,076	0	0
4011	RATES	8,519	7,984	8,689	7,186	7,984	0	8,287	0	0
4012	WATER RATES	237	318	242	329	340	0	360	0	0
4014	ELECTRICITY	3,532	2,426	2,750	950	2,000	0	2,100	0	0
4016	CLEANING MATERIALS	30	0	31	0	30	0	30	0	0
4017	CONTRACT CLEAN/WASTE	777	1,157	793	3,651	2,600	0	2,700	0	0
4021	TELEPHONE/FAX	268	0	273	0	0	0	0	0	0
4025	INSURANCE	127	131	130	138	138	0	175	0	0
4028	I.T.	0	0	0	309	309	0	0	0	0

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Annual Budget - By Committee (Actual YTD Month 9)

Note: Management accounts - year to 31 December 2025 - Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Ctte, 16 March 2026

		<u>Last Year 2024-25</u>		<u>Current Year 2025-26</u>				<u>Estimate 2026-27</u>		
		Budget	Actual	Total	Actual YTD	Projected	Committed	Agreed	EMR	Carried Forward
4036	PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	2,000	9,595	2,040	1,070	1,600	50	2,000	0	0
4037	GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	500	966	510	67	510	0	530	0	0
4038	OTHER MAINTENANCE	1,500	2,092	1,530	444	650	0	1,000	0	0
4042	EQUIPMENT INC. FURNITURE	1,500	54	1,530	600	1,000	0	1,000	0	0
4043	SMALL TOOLS & EQUIPT	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4059	OTHER PROF FEES	1,000	0	1,020	0	0	0	1,059	0	0
4064	HEALTH & SAFETY	100	0	102	0	0	0	106	0	0
4099	MISCELLANEOUS	0	216	0	13	0	0	0	0	0
4350	PLAQUES PURCHASED	100	103	102	210	225	0	235	0	0
4355	MEMORIAL MAINTENANCE	2,000	1,085	1,790	17	1,000	0	1,300	0	0
4888	O/S STAFF RECHARGE	138,044	67,030	110,000	48,615	67,702	0	122,580	0	0
4890	O/S O'HEAD RECHARGE	16,101	6,583	7,164	3,465	4,966	0	7,243	0	0
4892	C/S STAFF RCHG	13,823	13,369	16,017	11,159	15,628	0	15,241	0	0
4893	C/S O'HEAD RCHG	3,911	4,650	4,230	3,087	3,913	0	4,363	0	0
4899	DEPOT REALLOCATION	23,539	15,125	15,643	8,646	10,218	0	18,171	0	0
	Overhead Expenditure	236,617	151,984	193,976	104,027	139,369	50	208,998	0	0
	302 Net Income over Expenditure	-174,452	-101,361	-130,567	-59,377	-75,791	-50	-143,179	0	0
6000	plus Transfer from EMR	0	6,215	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(174,452)	(95,146)	(130,567)	(59,377)	(75,791)		(143,179)		
303	CLOSED CH'YARDS ST MARYS/HOLY									
4036	PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	16,000	34,588	11,000	448	5,500	0	10,000	0	0
4040	ARBORICULTURE	1,000	1,000	1,000	0	500	0	1,000	0	0
4059	OTHER PROF FEES	1,000	0	1,000	0	500	0	1,000	0	0
4888	O/S STAFF RECHARGE	0	4,668	0	6,182	7,995	0	9,801	0	0

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Annual Budget - By Committee (Actual YTD Month 9)

Note: Management accounts - year to 31 December 2025 - Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Ctte, 16 March 2026

		<u>Last Year 2024-25</u>		<u>Current Year 2025-26</u>				<u>Estimate 2026-27</u>		
		Budget	Actual	Total	Actual YTD	Projected	Committed	Agreed	EMR	Carried Forward
4890	O/S O'HEAD RECHARGE	0	971	0	413	586	0	579	0	0
4899	DEPOT REALLOCATION	0	579	0	1,094	1,207	0	1,453	0	0
	Overhead Expenditure	18,000	41,805	13,000	8,138	16,288	0	23,833	0	0
6000	plus Transfer from EMR	0	31,060	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(18,000)	(10,745)	(13,000)	(8,138)	(16,288)		(23,833)		
305	<u>ALLOTMENTS</u>									
4013	RENT PAID	125	-125	125	0	125	0	125	0	0
4036	PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	500	1,866	1,600	0	800	0	1,600	0	0
4037	GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	500	0	500	240	500	0	500	0	0
4038	OTHER MAINTENANCE	0	0	0	2,529	2,500	871	0	0	0
4040	ARBORICULTURE	0	900	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4495	TFR FROM EARMARKED R	0	0	0	-500	-500	0	0	0	0
4888	O/S STAFF RECHARGE	1,168	10,528	5,500	5,328	10,335	0	6,129	0	0
4890	O/S O'HEAD RECHARGE	107	832	358	351	758	0	362	0	0
4892	C/S STAFF RCHG	3,456	3,347	4,004	2,789	3,904	0	3,807	0	0
4893	C/S O'HEAD RCHG	978	1,163	1,058	772	978	0	1,090	0	0
4899	DEPOT REALLOCATION	213	2,119	782	951	1,560	0	909	0	0
	Overhead Expenditure	7,047	20,630	13,927	12,460	20,960	871	14,522	0	0
	Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(7,047)	(20,630)	(13,927)	(12,460)	(20,960)		(14,522)		
Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments - Income		370,812	382,482	394,928	317,424	418,213	0	453,228	0	0
Expenditure		927,230	892,027	910,693	618,195	867,561	921	1,028,300	0	0
Net Income over Expenditure		-556,418	-509,546	-515,765	-300,771	-449,348	-921	-575,072	0	0

Annual Budget - By Committee (Actual YTD Month 9)

Note: Management accounts - year to 31 December 2025 - Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Ctte, 16 March 2026

	<u>Last Year 2024-25</u>		<u>Current Year 2025-26</u>				<u>Estimate 2026-27</u>		
	Budget	Actual	Total	Actual YTD	Projected	Committed	Agreed	EMR	Carried Forward
plus Transfer from EMR	0	40,642	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>(556,418)</u>	<u>(468,904)</u>	<u>(515,765)</u>	<u>(300,771)</u>	<u>(449,348)</u>		<u>(575,072)</u>		
Total Budget Income	370,812	382,482	394,928	317,424	418,213	0	453,228	0	0
Expenditure	927,230	892,027	910,693	618,195	867,561	921	1,028,300	0	0
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>-556,418</u>	<u>-509,546</u>	<u>-515,765</u>	<u>-300,771</u>	<u>-449,348</u>	<u>-921</u>	<u>-575,072</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
plus Transfer from EMR	0	40,642	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>(556,418)</u>	<u>(468,904)</u>	<u>(515,765)</u>	<u>(300,771)</u>	<u>(449,348)</u>		<u>(575,072)</u>		

HALLS CEMETRIES AND ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE



Agenda Item: Public Halls Report
Meeting Date: Monday 16th March
Contact Officer: Venue & Events Officer

The purpose of this report is to provide updates and seek direction on the management of the Town Council's two public halls. These important community venues must be well maintained and effectively operated to meet local needs and support the Council's strategic objectives.

This report outlines a draft policy for the Local Art Display in 1863 Café, a proposed initiative (1 in 200) supporting local authors and additional operational updates.

1863 Local Art Display Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a simple and accessible framework for the display of local artwork within the café. The initiative aims to:

- Support and promote local artists, including emerging and young artists
- Enhance the café environment for visitors
- Provide a fair and manageable system for staff to administer

This scheme will operate in a straightforward manner to ensure ease of management and equitable access.

Principles

The Café Artwork Display Scheme will operate under the following principles:

- **Accessibility:** Opportunities will be open to local artists, with encouragement for emerging and young artists.
- **Fair Rotation:** Display periods will be limited to **6 weeks** to prevent any single artist from dominating the space.
- **Simplicity:** Application, selection, installation, and sales arrangements will be kept straightforward to minimise administrative burden.
- **Transparency:** Selection criteria and commission arrangements will be clear and openly communicated.

Eligibility

- Applicants must be **local artists** or have a **clear connection to the local area**.
- Both established and emerging artists may apply.
- Priority may be given to first-time exhibitors, young artists, or those who have not recently displayed work in the café.

The Council reserves the right to decline applications that are not suitable for a public café setting.

Display Arrangements

- Artwork will be displayed only in the designated wall space within the café.
- The standard display period will be 6 weeks.
- Artists are responsible for providing work that is ready to hang, clearly labelled, and compliant with any health and safety requirements.
- Officers will determine the number of pieces permitted per exhibition to ensure balanced use of space.

Sales and Commission

- No fee will be charged to artists for displaying their work.
- If Artists would like their artwork to be available for sale, they should outline the price on their application and provide contact details to WTC.
- Exhibitors will be able to enquire about purchasing artwork and will be provided with contact information for the artist.
- Where artwork is sold during the exhibition period, artists will be asked to offer an honest 15% commission to the Council.
- WTC must charge 20% VAT on top of the commission.

The commission income will contribute to supporting the continuation of the scheme and related community initiatives.

Application and Selection Process

- Artists must complete a simple application form and provide images of their work they wish to be displayed.
- Officers will assess applications against eligibility criteria, suitability for the space, and rotation considerations.
- Decisions will be made to ensure fairness, variety, and broad representation of local talent.

Where demand exceeds available space, a waiting list may be maintained and reducing the standard display duration will be considered.

Responsibilities

Artists

- Deliver and collect artwork at agreed times
- Ensure work is appropriately insured
- Provide accurate pricing and contact information
- Comply with agreed display dates

Council

- Allocate display periods
- Maintain a simple record of exhibitors and sales
- Provide reasonable care of the artwork while on display

Security

- The display area is in frame of the CCTV in the café
- WTC is NOT responsible for theft or damage caused by members of the public.

Review

This policy will be reviewed after 6 months and every 12 months thereafter to ensure it remains effective, accessible, and manageable for staff.

1 in 200 Initiative for Local Authors

Background

The **1 in 200 Initiative for Local Authors** is an Oxfordshire-based project that supports local independent writers by helping place their books in local bookshops, cafés, and community spaces.

Council officers have met with the founders, Laury Conn and Colin Wade, to discuss introducing the scheme within The Corn Exchange, specifically through the 1863 Café.

Proposed Arrangement

If approved, the initiative would operate as follows:

A dedicated bookshelf will be installed in the 1863 Café displaying books by local authors.

The display will include “1 in 200” branding, including an A4 poster frame explaining the scheme.

The **1 in 200 initiative** will:

- Manage **applications from authors**, ensuring an initial level of quality control.
- Provide a **catalogue of available titles** for venues to choose from.
- Handle the administrative coordination with authors.

Officers will **select a collection of titles quarterly** from the catalogue.

Financial Considerations

- There is **no cost to WTC to join the scheme**.
- WTC will receive **40% commission** on any books sold through the 1863 Café
- Books will be sold at their **recommended retail price (RRP)**.

Local Context

The Corn Exchange would be the **only participating venue in Witney**, with the nearest participating location currently in Burford. This provides an opportunity to support local authors while enhancing the café’s cultural offer.

Operational Requirements

The administrative requirements are expected to be manageable and will include:

- Uploading selected books into the café’s **EPOS system** using the provided RRP to enable sales tracking.
- **Promoting the scheme** through WTC’s social media channels and website.
- **Managing sales transactions** through the **1863 Café till**.
- Periodically **reviewing and refreshing the book selection** (quarterly).

Benefits

- Supports **local authors and the Oxfordshire creative community**.

- Enhances the **cultural offer of The Corn Exchange and 1863 Café**.
- Provides a **small revenue stream** through book sales.
- Encourages **community engagement and local pride** in creative talent.

Additional Operational Updates

Hearing Loop / Assisted Listening

Although an initial estimate quote fell within budget, two contractors who visited in December and January have provided quotes significantly out of the agreed budget. Officers are exploring further options to proceed with systems similar to those outlined in the first estimate.

Officers have also discovered through archive meeting minutes that a loop system was installed in the Corn Exchange Main Hall in 2016. The copper loop cable and connection point has been identified, but the amplifier detailed in the reports is not on site – this system has not been in use during the current officer’s time at the council. Initial tests with a different amplifier and a listening device found in the venue have not confirmed that the loop system is still in working order. Contact has been made with suppliers to see if this infrastructure is still usable and can be combined with our current PA system, to help reduce costs and increase our options.

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council’s Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality – By sourcing assisted listening solutions, WTC will improve access to its venues.
- b) Biodiversity – No impact
- c) Crime & Disorder – No impact
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency – No impact

Risk

In decision making Councillors should consider any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

- The 1863 Local Art Display proposal will support the council’s mission to use The Corn Exchange as a hub for local arts.
- The 1 in 200 Initiative is an opportunity for the council to support local authors, expanding the creative landscape

Financial implications

- Zero facility / equipment cost to introduce Local Art Display and 1 in 200 Author Scheme.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and

1. Consider the approval of the 1863 Local Art Display Policy
2. Consider the commencement of the 1 in 200 Local Author Scheme

HALLS, CEMETERIES & ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE



Agenda Item: Corn Exchange Business Report

Meeting Date: Monday 16th March 2026

Contact Officer: Venue & Events Officer

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the events that have taken place since the last committee meeting and report on forthcoming events in the diary. The report also provides an update on the recent business of 1863 Café & Bar.

Background

Witney Town Council aims to provide an affordable, sustainable, inclusive community arts facility that is valued and supported by the residents of Witney and West Oxfordshire. This objective is supported by funding from West Oxfordshire District Council for this purpose.

The Council seeks to make the Corn Exchange accessible to the whole community by encouraging participation and offering a diverse programme of music, arts and cultural events. In addition, the Council will provide a professional, well-maintained venue available to hire for private events such as parties, weddings, and conferences.

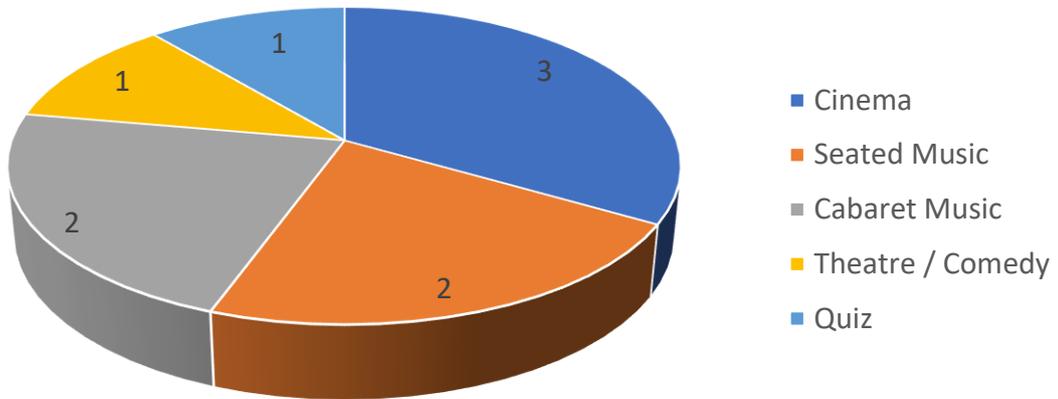
Current Situation

The Venue & Events team have been working hard to deliver a range of in-house and third-party events.

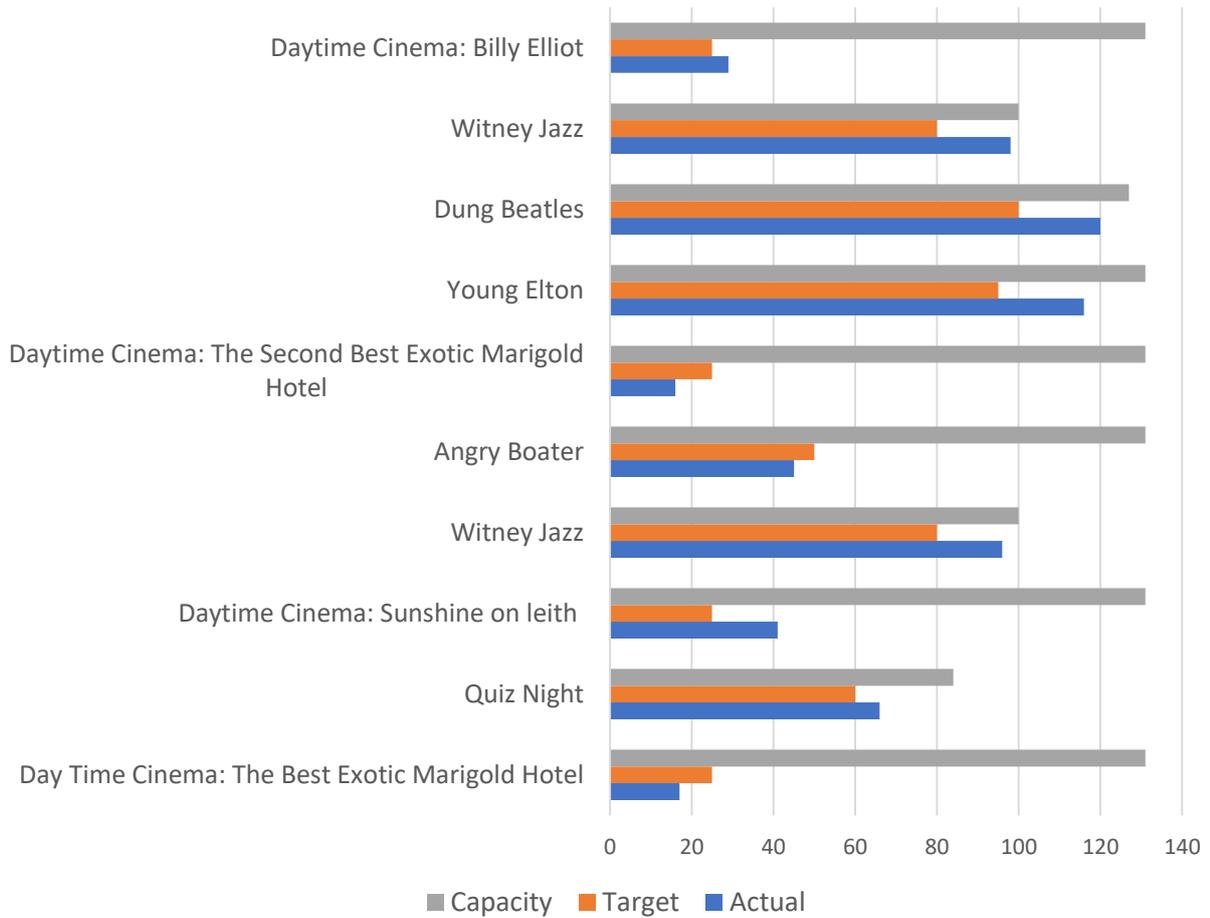
The graphs below show the number of ticketed events hosted by category, since the last report in January 2026, and attendance figures (where available) for each event at The Corn Exchange since the last report, alongside a target attendance to show how each event is performing in line with officers' goals and expectations. Each event capacity has also been included, upon request from members.

Officers schedule less events in January as it is typically a quieter month due to finances being tight for a lot of people after Christmas. However, officers are pleased to report successful attendances at recent events as shown in the table below.

Number of Events Per Category



Capacity, Target and Actual Attendance per Event



Recent events

Day Time Cinema

The Corn Exchange has hosted 4 Day Time Cinema screenings since the last report and officers are pleased to report an increase in attendance figures. Officers set a target of 25 attendees per film and have hit an average of 26 with the last 4 screenings. This can be attributed to the hard work and creative ideas of the Venue & Events Co-Ordinator. The 3-for-£10 deal has likely played a part to the increased attendances, along with a careful selection of feel-good British films which seem to be the most popular.

Witney Jazz

The Witney Jazz events continue to be a popular addition to our events program, with very good levels of consistent attendance. These events utilise the flexibility of the venue by combining a partial amount of tiered seating, with cabaret tables for an intimate jazz club atmosphere. Impressively, the Witney Jazz show on Friday 2nd January sold out.

Quiz Night

The Corn Exchange hosted another quiz at the end of January with 66 attendees. Officers are pleased with the attendances seen at the regular quiz nights and have booked them in monthly where possible.

Tribute Shows

The last weekend of February saw 2 WTC promoted tribute shows at The Corn Exchange, both of which were close to selling out. Young Elton, a returning favourite from 2025, had a 25% increase in attendance on last year with 116 tickets sold. The Dung Beatles performed at the Corn Exchange for the first time to an audience of 120, which is 94% capacity. Both shows ran smoothly and successfully and officers are in communication to book return shows with both acts.

Upcoming Events

The Corn Exchange will continue to host the regular repeated in-house and third-party events below:

- Witney Jazz – First Friday Every Month
- Tea Dance – Every Wednesday
- Multiple Classes hosted by Buttercross Theatre – Every Week
- Witney Speakers Club – Every other Wednesday
- Specsavers Coffee Morning – 1st Thursday of the month
- West Oxfordshire Art Society Lectures – Once a month
- St Mary's Art Group – Every Monday
- White Feather Spiritualist Church – Once a month

Upcoming Public Ticketed Events:

- 14th March - Decades Disco
- 20th March - Music Box at Witney Presents: The FEZZ and The Music of STEELY DAN
- 26th – 28th March – BTP Presents: Return to the Forbidden Planet
- 31st March - Day Time Cinema: Operation Mincemeat
- 10th April – Quiz Night

- 11th April - What You Will Presents: The Importance of Being Earnest
- 8th May – Stevie Mac (Steve Nicks and Fleetwood Mac Tribute)
- 12th – 17th May - Balancing Act Presents: Spare Prick

Venue Usage

As well as hosting public events, The Corn Exchange and Burwell Hall are hireable spaces available for a wide variety of bookings. Both venues receive a range of regular hirers as well as one-off private hirers.

Burwell Hall secured a new weekly hirer a few months ago, who has now also booked dates at The Corn Exchange, which will eventually be weekly when available. This is largely attributed to the positive customer service the hirer experienced with our bookings and caretaking team.

The usage report for the period **19 January – 22 March** indicates a **4.5% increase** in hours booked for the Gallery Room and a **15.5% increase** for Burwell Hall, while bookings for the Corn Exchange Main Hall show a **1% decrease** compared with last year.

Week commencing	19th Jan	26th Jan	2nd Feb	9th Feb	16th Feb	23rd Feb	2nd March	9th March	16th March		
CORN EX 2026 - 27											
Hours booked	32.00	33.00	39.00	26.00	23.00	34.00	50.00	44.00	44.00	325.00	Total Hrs
Usage Percentage	33.00	40.00	46.00	30.00	28.00	41.00	59.00	52.00	52.00	42.33	Average %
SAME PERIOD 2025 - 26											
CORN EXCHANGE											
Hours booked	17.00	25.00	44.00	34.00	46.00	39.00	49.00	33.00	41.00	328.00	Total Hrs
Usage Percentage	20.00	29.00	52.00	40.00	55.00	46.00	58.00	40.00	42.00	42.44	Average %
GALLERY 2026 - 27											
Hours booked	22.00	29.00	12.00	19.00	21.00	25.00	28.00	39.00	30.00	225.00	Total Hrs
Usage Percentage	26.00	35.00	14.00	22.00	25.00	29.00	33.00	46.00	35.00	29.44	Average %
SAME PERIOD 2025 - 26											
GALLERY											
Hours booked	32.00	32.00	14.00	23.00	11.00	19.00	21.00	23.00	40.00	215.00	Total Hrs
Usage Percentage	33.00	33.00	17.00	28.00	13.00	22.00	25.00	28.00	41.00	26.67	Average %
Burwell Hall											
MAIN HALL 2026 - 27											
Hours booked	45.00	48.00	50.00	41.00	32.00	48.00	44.00	40.00	47.00	395.00	Total Hrs
Usage Percentage	46.00	49.00	59.00	42.00	33.00	49.00	52.00	41.00	48.00	46.56	Average %
SAME PERIOD 2025 - 26											
MAIN HALL											
Hours booked	40.00	44.00	40.00	37.00	20.00	47.00	39.00	38.00	37.00	342.00	Total Hrs
Usage Percentage	41.00	47.00	41.00	38.00	19.00	48.00	46.00	39.00	38.00	39.67	Average %
*based on x3 4-hour sessions per day; 12 hours total per day - 84 hours per week.											

1863

Café & Bar

The 1863 Café & Bar has increased in popularity year-on-year. Since 1st April, overall takings from the Café and Bar are up 19.5% on the same period in 2024/25. This positive figure can be attributed to several factors. Good summer weather allowed us to maximise use of the pavement license on the square coupled with the Tunes on the Square event series providing consistent weekly trade. The decrease in footfall in the autumn and winter months was less significant this year, contributing to the overall increase. Improved reputation has led to more regular repeat café customers. An increase in event frequency and focus on promoting drinks for private events by the bar manager has encouraged an increase of bar sales.

Other Business

Theatre Programming for Schools

Officers have been exploring opportunities to introduce term-time theatre programming for local schools at the Corn Exchange. This work has been undertaken in collaboration with free advice and support from a local professional from the theatre industry who specialises in promoting productions for school audiences.

The Corn Exchange has previously hosted cinema screenings and a theatre production aimed at school-aged children during school holidays. However, there is an opportunity to expand this offer by hosting curriculum-linked or culturally enriching theatre productions during term time, enabling local schools to attend performances as part of the school day.

Officers have contacted several local schools and recently hosted an open discussion session at the venue with representatives from a number of them. This meeting identified strong interest in the initiative and indicated that a programme of performances could potentially be introduced from the next academic year.

If progressed, this initiative would provide educational and cultural benefits for local children, strengthen engagement between the Corn Exchange and local schools, and help develop future audiences for the arts within the community.

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality - The concept of equality when reporting on events is very important to the council, as it ensures fair and impartial coverage of all events and social groups within the community to reflect fairness, representation, and inclusivity.
- b) Biodiversity – Officers focus on the broader context of their actions when organising events to maintain the Council's environmental and conservation efforts.

- c) Crime & Disorder – Council policies and operational processes adhered to by Officers include a multi-faceted approach that integrates crowd control, prevention of criminal activity, security planning, and compliance with relevant laws and regulations. Officers assess the risks relating to events ensuring the necessary due diligence, reviews, sign off and monitoring is completed. Post event analysis data is used to review opportunities for continuous improvement.
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency – Careful consideration is given to the environmental and climate impacts to reduce negative effects and promote sustainability. Many aspects of event planning by the Council include venue location, transportation, recycling, local produce, and energy usage. By incorporating sustainable practices into every stage of event planning, the Council aims to reduce the environmental impact, create a positive attendee experience, and help lead the way for more responsible event management in the future.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

Managing risks for Council events is a crucial aspect of event planning and requires careful thought to ensure the safety and success of all events. The Council's risk management control measures for events covers legal considerations, safety protocols, insurance, and other key factors ensure these are delivered successfully.

Social Value

- The Corn Exchange is registered as a warm space this winter, providing a cosy refuge from the cold, as well as a welcoming environment for socialising and engaging in conversation.
- The Corn Exchange also hosts some events with a community focus, providing people with an opportunity to connect through shared experiences, reducing loneliness.
- 1863 Café provides affordable hot drinks and has enabled social connection for lots of elderly people. Sharing tables is encouraged which allows us to serve more customers and creates a warm and friendly atmosphere.

Financial implications

All events are evaluated from the planning stage to post event analysis to manage financial risk and maximise income.

The proposed model would be **self-funded through ticket sales**, with schools typically booking between one and four classes per performance. Ticket costs are usually met through a combination of school funding and parent contributions, which is standard practice for school theatre visits.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and

- 1) Delegate to officers to progress the proposal and undertake the necessary actions to enable Term-Time Theatre Productions for school audiences to be introduced.

Agenda Item 8

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@publicagroup.uk>

Sent: 06 February 2026 14:19

To: Town Clerk <townclerk@witney-tc.gov.uk>

Subject: Proposal to Improve Bin Storage Area at Thorney Leys Shops - ///sounding.vaccines.hoped

Good afternoon Sharon

....

I am writing regarding a number of complaints we have received from both residents and local businesses about the parade of three shops on Thorney Leys, near Burwell Hall.

At present, the three businesses share three 1100-litre refuse bins, which are being stored in two of the car parking spaces directly in front of the premises. Unfortunately, this arrangement has become unsightly and is also encouraging fly-tipping, with items such as mattresses and broken household appliances being left there.

I would like to explore whether we can work together to improve this area. At location ///sounding.vaccines.hoped, I am proposing to arrange for my contractors to install a 2m x 3m hardstanding base, tucked around the corner from the shops, specifically for the bins. This would significantly improve the appearance of the area and would also free up two parking spaces.

In addition, I would ask my ERS colleagues to install fly-tipping signage to help deter further dumping, and request that the Ubico team carry out a litter pick of the surrounding verges so that we can start afresh.

I have already spoken with the three businesses involved, and they are supportive of this proposal. They feel it would greatly improve the appearance of the area outside their shops and takeaways.

The grass verge in question is, I understand, owned by Witney Town Council, so I felt it was important to seek your comments and permission before taking this any further.

I would be grateful to hear your thoughts.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]