

Annual Report 2023/24



Sedgefield Town Council





Welcome to Sedgefield Town Council's Annual Report 2023/24

The purpose of this report is to explain how Sedgefield Town Council has operated during 2023/24 and the work it has undertaken during this time. Further information about the Town Council can be found on our website sedgefieldtowncouncil.gov.uk.

The publication of this Annual Report will coincide with our Annual Town Meeting held on Tuesday 7th May 2024 at 7pm in Sedgefield Parish Hall. This meeting will be an opportunity for the Council to not only present this report but also to answer any questions from the public. This report can be viewed on the Council's website or at the Council Offices.



Image of Sedgefield Town Council's 2023 fireworks display by kind permission of Mr Paul Heasman

Sedgefield Town Council

Sedgefield Town Council serves Sedgefield Parish which includes the town itself plus Thorpe Larches, Foxton and Embleton. The Council comprises of 15 elected Councillors. Each year in May at its Annual General Meeting (AGM) the Council elects a Chair and a Mayor.

In May 2023, Councillor Mel Carr was elected as Chair of the Council and Councillor Dave Jasper as the Mayor of Sedgefield.

The Council conducts its business through a Committee system as follows:

Committee:	Meetings Held:
Monthly Meeting	2 nd Monday of every month
Policy & Resources	After each Monthly Meeting
Environment	After each Policy & Resources Meeting
Community Development & Engagement	After each Environment Meeting
Personnel	As required
Sedgefield Extra	As required
Community Chest	As required

Please note: In some instances dates are changed because of Bank Holidays. No committee meetings are held in August. An annual meetings' calendar is displayed in the Council Offices, town noticeboard and on the Council's website.

Details of the work of each of these Committees is contained later in this Report.

In addition to the committees are a series of working groups which undertake research and investigation to propose recommendations for consideration by all Councillors at the relevant committee. During 2023/24, the Council had working groups covering Estates, Finance, Fireworks, Policy & Records Management and Butterwick Road Cemetery.

How To Contact Sedgfield Town Council

The Town Council operates from the Town Council Offices on Front Street, Sedgfield and is open to the public:

Monday	9am – 12 noon
Tuesday	9am – 12 noon
Wednesday	9am – 1pm
Thursday	9am – 12 noon
Friday	9am – 12 noon

Enquiries can also be made via the following:

Post:	Town Council Offices, Front Street, Sedgfield TS21 3AT
Telephone:	01740 621273 (24 hour answerphone service available)
Email:	town.clerk@sedgfieldtowncouncil.gov.uk

We aim to respond within 5 working days to all such enquiries.



Sedgefield Town Councillors

During 2023/24, the following Councillors held office:

<p>Allan Blakemore</p> <p>32 Beacon Avenue, Sedgefield 01740 621820</p>	<p>David Brown</p> <p>Town Farm House, 3 West End, Sedgefield 01740 622894</p>	<p>Mark Cant</p> <p>Mordon Moor Farm, Sedgefield 07818 243774</p>
<p>Ann Carr</p> <p>3 The Square, Sedgefield 01740 629070</p>	<p>Mel Carr</p> <p>3 The Square, Sedgefield 01740 629070</p>	<p>Kelly Dickerson</p> <p>30 Beaumont Court Sedgefield 07720 080497</p>
<p>John Finlayson</p> <p>5 Pine Ridge Avenue Sedgefield 01740 622313</p>	<p>Elizabeth Flanagan</p> <p>33 Hamminkeln Place, Sedgefield 07760 640059</p>	<p>Catherine Hart</p> <p>Foxton Farm Foxton 07837 126472</p>
<p>Jenny Haworth</p> <p>27 Station Road Sedgefield 07946 569178</p>	<p>Peter Hinde</p> <p>44 West End, Sedgefield 01740 621709 (co-opted Oct 2023)</p>	<p>Dave Jasper</p> <p>The Mews, 1 Rosedale Close, Sedgefield 07791 030886</p>
<p>Julie Towler</p> <p>6 Mitford Court Sedgefield 07979 376997</p>	<p>Mavis Wayman</p> <p>32 White House Drive Sedgefield 01740 620337</p>	<p>Stephen Winter</p> <p>30 The Orchard Sedgefield 07916 228929</p>

Message from the Chairman of Sedgefield Town Council - Councillor Mel Carr



It has been a privilege to have been the Chairman of Sedgefield Town Council over the past 12 months. 2023/24 has been busy and challenging at times.

We started 2023/24 with the announcement of the winner of the Citizen of the Year 2022 Award, an award which is organised by Sedgefield Town Council, Sedgefield Development Trust and Sedgefield Rotary Club. Mrs Wendy Rowley was the very worthy winner reflecting all her outstanding community work.

The Town Council has continued to represent its residents and help with their enquiries and issues of concern. Where necessary we have worked with other organisations, including Durham County Council, to seek resolutions or to create new features in the town such as the Heritage 100 walk (more details on the back page of this report). This report details the work of the Council's various committees and working groups as well as providing an in-sight into the Town Council's work, its finances and governance as well as ways in which you can find out more from our range of communication channels including our website, social media usage and publications. This report provides contact details for all Town Councillors.

Message from the Chairman

(continued)

I would like to reference the considerable work that has taken place in the last year in relation to our capital project to expand Butterwick Road Cemetery, an extensive amount of behind the scenes work that should result in work on the ground in the coming year. The Town Council has been part of a Durham County Council led Active Travel Project which has secured funding for the Town for various projects including the refurbishment of the brick bus shelter in the centre of the village green and installation of bike racks plus completion of the vital pedestrian link between Sedgefield and Hardwick Park (with further work needed to ensure this is accessible for all users). This work continues into 2024/25. The Town Council has also worked with Durham County Council to seek Section 106 funding to refurbish the play area at Winterton and to see improvements to the play area at Eden Drive, work which will be undertaken in the coming year.

Over the last year the Town Council has successfully delivered a very varied programme of community events, all of which were very well attended and lots of positive feedback received.

During 2023/24 we welcomed several new faces to our team. Peter Hinde joined the Town Council as a Co-opted Councillor. Kate Lawson has joined as our new Gardener and Helen Reeder as Parish Hall Weekend Relief Officer.

I would like to thank my fellow Town Councillors for their hard work and support during 2023/24 as well as the Town Clerk and all Council staff .

Councillor Mel Carr, Chairman of Council



Mrs Wendy Rowley, winner of the Citizen of the Year 2022 Award.

Mayor's Report Councillor Dave Jasper



I was delighted to be elected to represent Sedgefield for another year as your Mayor and what an enjoyable year it has been! The first thing I had to do was to choose a different headline charity. I had been involved with The Red Sky Foundation musically in the years before Covid and it struck me that there was a great need in Sedgefield for defibrillators. I talked to its founder, Sergio Petrucci in Sunderland about his North East charity and he said that he would make sure our village was well covered if I chose his charity to be my main charity and, soon after, true to his word, 6 defibrillators duly arrived.

But also of great importance to me is to give something back to Sedgefield, which is a great place to raise a family. As your Mayor, it has been an absolute honour and a privilege to represent Sedgefield at close on 150 civic functions and fundraising events, many of them in Sedgefield and the rest dotted around County Durham, Northumberland, Teesside and Tyne and Wear. It has been really rewarding to show off Sedgefield at its best to a whole new set of Mayors and also to visit places which, ordinarily, I would not have had the opportunity to visit, such as Hylton Castle and Wootzano's pioneering exhibition. Indeed, many of the new Mayors have been most complimentary about our delightful town and always look forward to coming here, as do some of last year's Mayors. The large amount of money raised this year is largely down to the generosity of good people like yourselves.

I have endeavoured to visit lots of community groups and our 2 primary schools to meet residents, teachers and students and find out exactly what activities they are engaged in. It has been lovely to talk to a whole new set of villagers and to get to

Mayor's Report

(continued)

know so many local people, including those at DIDO, the Pop-In Club, the Woodland and Wildlife Group, the Memory Café and most village coffee mornings.

This year I have organised 5 different live bands performances, 3 coffee mornings, a fashion show, a cabaret, a race night and even an afternoon tea party with a vintage bus ride thrown in. This year there have also been 2 Farmers' Market charity stalls, tub planting with village youngsters, a Co-op Funeralcare Dedication Day Opening Ceremony, a quiz, a Mayor's Ball, Sedgefield Show judging, Hallowe'en Howler judging, fireworks to set off and championing Sarah McPhie at Feeding Families. I worked with Samantha Cox at Readley (Mesothelioma UK,) the Woodland and Wildlife Group, had a Christmas tree to decorate in the St Edmund's Church Christmas Tree Festival, held a Civic Service in St John Fisher RC Church and a Civic Carol Service in St Edmund's Church, gave a talk to the Ranger Guides and even made a speech, partly in German, at the Twinning Association's Farewell Dinner!

In conclusion, before I hang up my chains, I am very much looking forward to distributing cheques from my Mayor's Charity at our Annual Town Meeting but I must begin by paying tribute to my redoubtable Consort, Annette Lawson, for giving me such unstinting support all year long at almost every event – people joke that we must be joined at the hip! I would like to acknowledge my Secretary, Jane Tate's skill at organising my diary so efficiently and Town Clerk, Jane Ayre for her wisdom and guidance all year. Natalie, Julia and Adam in the office have also been pillars of support, for which I thank them all. I am grateful to the many individuals and businesses who have provided prizes or sponsorship at my events. However, I have to reserve my very special thanks to the members of Sedgefield Players, (including my 'non-acting bar manager', Judith Featherstone) who have all worked so hard at virtually every event of mine, sourcing prizes, setting up this Parish Hall, clearing up afterwards, removing bags of empty glass bottles, running the kitchen here and especially for putting on a Hallowe'en Spectacular, even though they were in the midst of pantomime rehearsals. I have also gathered together a quality team of top-class home bakers, with Margaret Dickerson as their co-ordinator, to make the cakes and scones for my coffee mornings. Another stalwart supporter this year has been Tim Dredge, the Co-op Pioneer, who has come up trumps time and time again for me with bags of consumable goods. I wouldn't have been half as successful in my fundraising efforts this year without all these lovely people behind me all the way. Thank you so much, team. It has been a fantastic journey.

Councillor Dave Jasper, Mayor of Sedgefield

Annual Report 2023/24



Annual Report 2023/24



Review of the Past Year **Dr Jane Ayre, Town Clerk**

2023/24 was yet another extremely busy and varied year for Sedgfield Town Council.

We welcomed over 2000 visitors through the Town Council Offices door and answered over 900 phone calls made just to our Council's reception line alone while dealing with several thousands of email enquiries during 2023/24. We continue to take great pride in being able to help people with their concerns and enquiries. In over 150 instances these enquiries related to matters handled by Durham County Council and we progressed these on behalf of individuals. For several of those the assistance of our local County Councillors Chris Lines and David Brown was sought and I am grateful for their support.

During 2023/24 we organised and delivered a very busy programme of community events which were all greatly received and very well supported. It was wonderful to see so many young people involved in our community tub planting event and their floral displays looked stunning over the summer months. Our three coach trips to Keswick, Skipton and York were sell-outs. The Fireworks Display was also very well attended and there were lots of amazing entries in the Halloween Howler competition. The Remembrance Sunday service was very poignant and attended by all ages as the Town came together to pay their respects. Our Snow Party was a great start to the festive season with lots of excited children seeing Santa in his Grotto, attending the free activities in the Parish Hall and then going with their family and friends other activities taking place in the Town before coming together for a short carol service in St Edmund's Church and seeing the Town's festive lights being switched on. Work is already underway to plan our 2024/25 events.

2023 saw the Coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla, another historic event for our country. Sedgfield played its part in marking this event with a commemorative church service at St Edmund's church followed by a community celebration day with musical programme of events at Ceddesfeld Hall including refreshment and crown making workshop. This event was well attended and it was lovely to see people coming together to mark a special moment in time. I would like to thank the SCA, Sedgfield Area Churches Together and Sedgfield Youth Club for their support and sterling work with this event as well as funding received from our local Area Action Partnership. During 2023 the Town Council also purchased and planted a Queen's Tree, in memory of the late HM Queen Elizabeth II, on behalf of the Parish at Beacon Lane cemetery where it will have the space to grow into a veteran tree, hopefully to be enjoyed by many generations to come.

2023/24 has been another incredibly busy year for Sedgfield Parish Hall. The hall is a fantastic asset to Sedgfield, and it is wonderful to see it so busy and used for such

varied activities enjoyed by so many from coffee mornings to exercise classes, birthday parties, youth club sessions, plays, musical performances and more! Take a look at our website www.sedgefieldtowncouncil.gov.uk for more information about the hall, its facilities and hire charges.

The cost of energy has been a concern for everyone over recent years and the Town Council is no exception. Over recent years we have focussed upon this issue and been able to ensure we obtain our utility supplies as cost effectively as possible. We have also spent a considerable amount of time in 2023/24 scrutinising our energy costs and introducing measures to make efficiency savings and conserve energy but there is considerably more work to do in this area for not only the Parish Hall but also our Town Council offices and cemetery compound facility. I would like to thank Parish Hall users for assisting in this matter where they can.

Despite the town no longer participating in the Northumbria In Bloom competition, the standard of the Town's floral displays in 2023/24 were maintained and were a joy to behold throughout the year. Thankfully we did not see any repeat of the vandalism which we experienced in the latter part of the previous year meaning that we had floral displays throughout the entire year. This reflects the hard work of our gardening staff and the sterling work of the Sedgefield In Bloom Group. I would like to say particular thanks to our Head Gardener & Cemetery Superintendent, Stephen Young, who spent the majority of the year working alone designing, planting, watering and maintaining our displays as well as running Butterwick Road Cemetery whilst the Town Council recruited a new Gardener. The Town Council takes great pride in our open spaces and, within our budgetary constraints, maintains our land, floral beds and tubs to a high standard. At the end of 2023/24 our grass cutting contract was put out to tender and we have awarded this to our appointed contractor for a period of two years.

The Town Council's website has been re-developed and provides a huge amount of information about our work and events (www.sedgefieldtowncouncil.gov.uk). We have received lots of very positive feedback regarding the new site and its accessibility. In addition to the website we have an X account (@SedgefieldTC) (formerly Twitter) which provides very regular and timely updates relating to lots of aspects of the Town Council's work as well as news and signposting to other sources of support and information. We have a steadily growing number of visitors and followers to both these communication methods as well as to the residents database.

Review of the Past Year

(continued)

During 2023/24 considerable work has been taking place on our project to expand Butterwick Road Cemetery. The Town Council is committed to continuing to offer a burial site in the town. Our planning application has now been approved, a specialist contractor appointed to project manage this expansion for us, detailed specifications have been prepared and tenders are to be sought imminently. It is our intention that work will commence on-site during 2024/25 and the Town Council will keep you updated via articles in the Sedgefield Extra.

During 2023/24 we welcomed two new members of staff to our Council team. Kate Lawson, our new Gardener, has settled into her role and is getting to know people as she is out and about around our open spaces. Helen Reeder, our Parish Hall Weekend Relief Officer, who oversees opening, cleaning and closing of the Parish Hall over weekends and is getting to know lots of our Parish Hall users. We warmly welcome them to our team.

The Town Council's Committee meetings take place in Sedgefield Parish Hall typically on the second Monday of the month commencing at 7pm. Dates for our future Council Committee meetings can be found on our website (www.sedgefieldtowncouncil.gov.uk/meetings/) and displayed in the Town noticeboard in front of the library. Members of the public are warmly welcomed and there is the opportunity for you to speak if you wish. Please consider whether you would like to attend and find out more about the work being undertaken on your behalf.

I would like to express my sincerest thanks to all Town Council staff - Julia Rowsby, Jane Tate, Natalie Chowns-Traynor, Adam Heath, Joyce Stephenson, Helen Reeder, Stephen Young and Kate Lawson - who continue to work tirelessly and with the utmost professionalism on behalf of you all.

In summary 2023/24 has been an extremely busy and testing year but, once again, I am confident that the Town Council is as well prepared as possible to face the challenges of 2024/25 whatever they may be!

Dr Jane Agre, Town Clerk

Chair of Committee Reports:

Policy & Resources (P&R) Committee

Chair: Councillor Allan Blakemore



Sedgefield Town Council's P&R Committee oversees all the financial and procedural undertakings of the Council. In many ways this work follows similar lines to that of a business. However, as a local authority, Sedgefield Town Council must work within several legal constraints. We have robust financial and governance arrangements in place which are subject to independent internal and external audits to ensure full compliance. We are delighted with the outcome of these audits and in 2023/2024 all our internal audits have achieved "Full Assurance" rating as well as being compliant with all the external auditors' requirements. This is a wonderful achievement by our administrative staff.

Alongside the day-to-day work undertaken by the Council within this last financial year, many of the major projects have carried on from what I reported in the last annual report.

Our cemetery extension work continues. This has been a long project and the most expensive that Sedgefield Town Council has ever undertaken. Whilst we applied for Section 106 monies and we also had reserves put to one side, it may be necessary to also apply for a loan to cover this project. Work with The Cemetery Development Service Group continues and as well as assisting the Town Council with planning and development, they will also oversee work as it progresses. There has been an enormous amount of time and effort put into the layout to ensure that we have maximum benefit of the space available and that the aesthetics are pleasing to the eye. There will also be a new entrance which will avoid having to enter the cemetery via Cemetery Lodge. This will also allow for funeral vehicles to enter through the new access and have adequate space to turn around to leave.

We have continued the work on the trees within Sedgefield. Following the survey carried out in 2022 which assessed all the trees on Town Council owned land. This will now be an ongoing assessment in order to ensure that all trees meet safety standards.

Councillor Allan Blakemore, Chairman of P&R Committee

Personnel Committee

Chair: Councillor Allan Blakemore



Sedgefield Town Council now has a full complement of staff within its staffing establishment.

Carrying out duties within the Council Office are Jane Ayre (Town Clerk) Jane Tate, Julia Rowsby, Jane Tate, Natalie Chowns-Traynor and, our most recent addition to the office Team, Adam Heath. Adam is now the first point of contact for residents as they enter the door, working throughout public opening hours to deal with all initial enquiries.

Stephen Young is joined by a new Gardener Kate Lawson who you will see around the village looking after the open spaces, floral display and watering the tubs.

Joyce Stephenson continues overseeing the day-to-day caretaking and cleaning at the Parish Hall, with Adam Heath also responsible for afternoon/evening openings and closings Monday to Thursday. Covering the weekend duties is Helen Reeder who joined us during 2023/24.

We warmly welcome Kate and Helen to our team.

During the course of the last year, all staff positions have been subject to job evaluation to ensure all positions are in-line with grades used nationwide. This matter has now concluded and all findings implemented.

As the town is growing there is increased pressure on all concerned to meet the demands of the extra work created. Our staff continue to work to an extremely high standard which is reflected in all the positive feedback that Councillors receive from residents.

Councillor Allan Blakemore, Chairman of Personnel Committee



Community Development & Engagement Committee

Chair: Councillor Mavis Wayman



During the year we have had a normal programme of community events. Covid restrictions are out of the way allowing us the freedom of planning social events. However, we still maintain a high standard of health and safety in the planning of all events.

Our coach trips prove to be very popular events. These non-profit making trips and three took place during 2023/24 to Keswick, Skipton and York.

Our annual Tub Planting event on the village green with helpers from both local schools and community groups took place in June 2023. It's always a delight to see young members of our community taking care of our environment and taking pride in seeing the tubs in full bloom in the summer.

Sedgefield Youth Club continues to thrive and be a fantastic asset for the town. They have had a fantastic year with more details of their activities later in this report.

The Fireworks & Halloween Howler event was as popular as ever. We were delighted with the positive feedback from the public showing this is a much appreciated event. We get more and more tables out to hold the entries each year!

Our annual Snow Party took place in December 2023. We collaborated with St Edmund's Church and held the carols amongst the beautifully decorated Christmas trees. As always, the SCA provided great support, hosting our craft fayre in Ceddesfeld Hall and running the bar following the event. Thanks go again to Wendy Rowley & the Pop In volunteers for putting on amazing refreshments alongside the craft fayre.

Citizen of the Year 2022 was awarded to Wendy Rowley for her unstinting contribution to the Pop In Club over the years. For those unaware of the group, it meets three times a week in Ceddesfeld Hall providing a happy atmosphere to chat and have a coffee & biscuit. Days out are a particular highlight for the members. Wendy and her helpers do an amazing job. Finally, as I write this, we have just closed nominations for the Citizen of the Year and Young Citizen of the Year 2023 and the winners of both will be announced very soon!

Councillor Mavis Wayman, Chairman of Community Development & Engagement Committee

Annual Report 2023/24



Community Chest Committee

Chair: Councillor Julie Towler



Sedgefield benefits from an extremely proactive and invaluable community and voluntary sector, many of whom rely on grants and fundraising opportunities to function. The Council introduced the Community Chest many years ago, a fund supported by a ring-fenced amount of £500 each financial year, with any unspent funding being carried forward.

This grant funding allows local groups and organisations to access donations of up to £100. The remit of this committee is to reward grants to good causes, local groups and organisations which add value or have direct benefit to Sedgefield and its residents. Organisations which host events that benefit Sedgefield and individuals whose actions bring benefit to the community may also be considered.

Organisations can apply by letter or email to the Town Clerk, detailing why the funding is required, what it will be spent on and an explanation of how it will benefit the residents of Sedgefield.

The total available funds accumulated as a result of the pandemic, meaning that in 2023/24 we were able to award £820 in total grants to the following groups:

- 1st Sedgefield Brownies
- 1st Sedgefield Guides
- 2nd Sedgefield Brownies
- Pop In Club
- Sedgefield in Bloom
- Sedgefield Memory Café
- Sedgefield Players
- Sedgefield Ranger Guides
- Sedgefield Youth Club
- Sew Easy
- St Edmund's Church Christmas Tree Festival

If you feel your group or organisation would benefit from a small donation, take a look on our website for full details and criteria: www.sedgefieldtowncouncil.gov.uk/community-chest/.

Councillor Julie Towler, Chairman of Community Chest



Sedgefield Youth Club
Management Committee
Chair: Councillor Julie Towler



Sedgefield Youth Club formed in 2017, providing a fun, safe environment for young people to make new friends, have lots of fun and learn valuable skills. The club's staffing is funded by Sedgefield Town Council, who also provide room hire free of charge during term time. Additional funding is sought throughout the year to run non-term time/holiday sessions. The Club's membership has continued to grow. With consistently more attendees in the lower age range, we decided to alter our sessions and encourage children in year 6 to attend the senior session. This has balanced the sessions and allows us (and older attendees) to provide more of that much needed guidance and support transitioning from primary to secondary school. All Monday night sessions are now only 50p to attend.

Some of our oldest, original members have been taking on leadership and staffing roles in the club. George Nott, who graduated from the senior sessions a few years ago, has been undertaking a leadership qualification and helping our two core staff members run the sessions in a paid role. Neve Nuttall and Iona Darnton have become volunteers, now attending both sessions every week. We are incredibly proud of their progression and passion for the club, and they continue to be an invaluable asset to the growth of our club.

In addition to our weekly sessions where we love to bake, cook, craft and play games, we have also participated in a number of local events this year, including the Fireworks Display and Snow Party, where we run a fundraising bake sale. We also held a number of coffee mornings during school holidays which help support non-term time activities, trips and special themed nights such as our Valentines and Christmas parties.

We hosted our second Breakfast with Santa in December 2023 and it was a huge success. We were joined by Mrs Claus this year too, which made it even more special! Children and families were treated to a home-cooked breakfast, lots of goodies and gifts, a cookie decorating session, a singalong and 1:1 experience with Santa. We will be looking to make this a regular fundraising event for the club and look forward to adding more magic this Christmas!

SYC Management Committee

(continued)

This year, the club's Management Committee have updated the club's constitution, which was adopted at the special meeting in February 2024 and undergone an internal audit. This has been a great learning experience. We are always looking for parents and other individuals with an interest in running a community group to join our Management Committee.

Sedgefield Youth Club are very grateful for the continued support from Sedgefield Town Council and all residents who support us through fundraising activities and promoting our club. Thanks also go to those who have helped support our non-term time sessions this year, including Mayor of Sedgefield Dave Jasper, EDRC AAP/Fun & Food and local Co-op Member Pioneer Tim Dredge.

Keep an eye on our dedicated news page on the town council's website www.sedgefieldtowncouncil.gov.uk/youth-club-news/ for latest club news, holiday session announcements and much more!



Annual Report 2023/24



Butterwick Road and Winterton Allotments

Sedgefield Town Council oversees 44 plots spanning across two sites. Winterton and Butterwick Road. Winterton is currently home to 22 plots, a mixture of full and half plots. Butterwick Road holds 21 full plots and 1 half plot.

We are always impressed with the high standards of cultivation and presentation at our allotments. While both sites have a very different feel, and each location has benefits and challenges, our tenants are always dedicated and hardworking. It's a joy to watch an empty plot transform as a new tenant's vision comes to life.



2023 was our first full year of in-house allotment inspections and we found that this new system works really well and allows any problems or concerns to be addressed fairly quickly.

For many years, our waiting list for Sedgefield residents has consistently held over 20 names, despite a handful of plots changing tenants every year. With this in mind, we updated our policy and no longer rent allotment plots to anyone living outside of the Sedgefield Parish boundary, something which was previously permitted only if/when there were no Sedgefield residents on the waiting list.

We have noticed over recent years that many prospective tenants are now specifically asking for half plots on their applications, as the task of tending to a full allotment garden can be too much for some. We are constantly monitoring appropriate sizing of plots.

Applicants joining our waiting list can expect a wait of approximately 4-5 years. We understand that within that time frame circumstances can change, however, we would advise that anyone interested in a plot at either site should complete an application form or email natalie@sedgefieldtowncouncil.gov.uk to ensure you are in the system as soon as possible.

How We Keep You Up To Date With Our Work:

Sedgefield Extra

During 2023/24, we have continued to publish four editions of Sedgefield Extra, all inserted into the corresponding issue of the Sedgefield News and delivered to residents. We are always grateful to Sedgefield Development Trust and its volunteers, who have delivered the Extra on our behalf. The publication of Sedgefield Extra complements the other communications activity undertaken by the Town Council and each edition of the Extra, as well as being printed, is posted online via individual articles on the news page, and shared via social media.



Sedgefield Town Council X Account (formerly Twitter): @SedgefieldTC

The Town Council shares lots of information about council activities, meeting reminders and useful updates about local life via our X account @SedgefieldTC . Please take a look and consider following us as a way to keep up to date with local issues.



Sedgefield Town Council Website: www.sedgefieldtowncouncil.gov.uk

The Town Council's website (www.sedgefieldtowncouncil.gov.uk) was relaunched in September 2023 following months of planning, rebuilding and repopulating. We have improved upon the information contained in our old site such as council services, councillor and committees information, accounts and procedures, Parish Hall information, meetings and Mayoral content, plus added some key new areas such as an events page and a youth club section, plus easier to navigate news and minutes archives. You can also now use the handy contact form at the bottom of key pages to get in touch if your queries cannot be answered by the content on the page.

The new site is much easier to find your way around and we have placed a large focus on ensuring it is accessible for as many users as possible, with continuous review and testing through accessibility software. The new site will continue to be expanded upon over the coming years.



Residents' Database:

The Town Council also operates a residents' email database through which we cascade an array of information including events, environmental matters, planning updates, road and footpath closures and more. If you would like to register with this database, please contact jane@sedgefieldtowncouncil.gov.uk.

Please remember Town Councillors are available at all times and enjoy hearing from you!

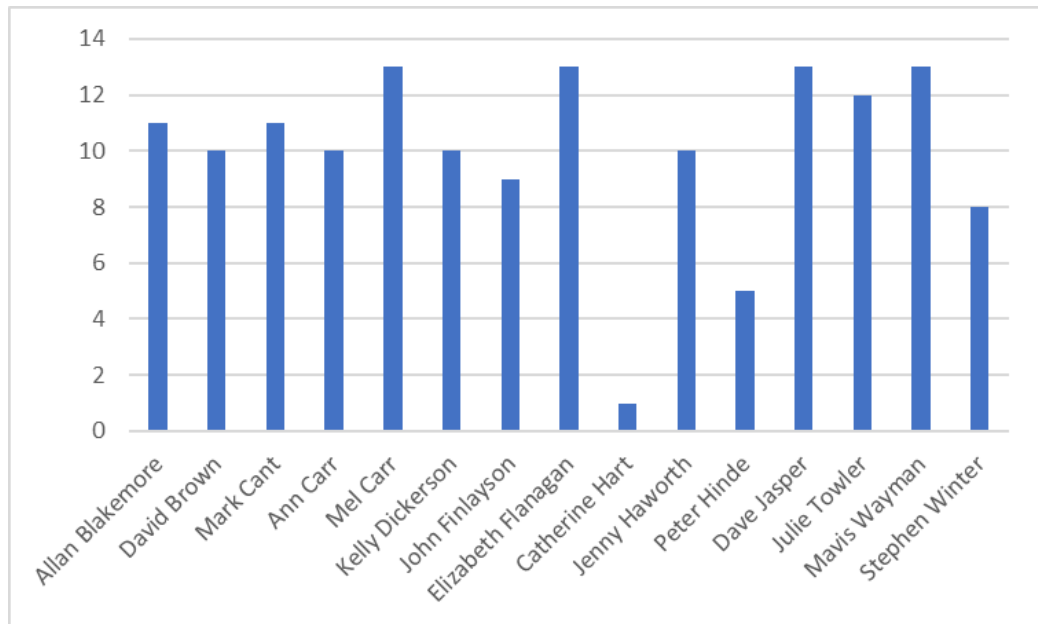
The P&R Committee met in January 2024 to consider the Town Council’s precept request for 2024/25. Through continued financial vigilance, Sedgefield Town Council was able to keep its increase in precept to 6.8% on a Band D rating.

In accordance with legislation, it is a statutory requirement to publish allowances received by Councillors. The agreed allowance per month for Sedgefield Town Councillors is £25.75. This was claimed over the past civic year by:

Councillors David Brown, Ann Carr, Mel Carr, John Finlayson, Elizabeth Flanagan, Jenny Haworth, Dave Jasper, Julie Towler and Mavis Wayman

Councillor Attendance at Meetings

A request was made to publish the attendance record of Sedgefield Town Councillors in 2023/24. This request was agreed and below are the attendance figures for the Council’s Monthly meetings, Annual General Meeting and Annual Town Meeting (Total 13) for 2023/24. These figures do not include attendance at Special meetings, committee meetings, working group meetings and other meetings:



Note: Cllr Peter Hinde was co-opted onto the Council in October 2023.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

31/03/23		Unaudited 31/03/24
£		£
	<u>Income</u>	
1,960.89	Bank Interest	12,095.82
16,930.66	Mayor's Charity	21,056.60
3,060.00	Ceddesfeld Hall	3,299.00
378,070.64	Precept	422,367.08
24,910.06	Parish Hall Hire	25,696.52
2,375.40	Community Services	4,268.00
0.00	Parish Hall Grant — Lighting Project	11,811.00
150.00	Open Spaces	220.00
7,916.95	Cemetery Lodge	7,782.56
4,395.00	Cemetery	10,607.00
6,275.95	Events	6,200.24
0.00	Environmental Grant Funding — Active Travel Project	10,000.00
4,216.85	Environment	3,913.15
245.66	Income Misc	100.00
450,508.06	TOTAL INCOME	539,416.97
	<u>Expenditure</u>	
12,055.11	Council Offices	8,613.57
19,967.99	Community Development	22,880.45
21,667.77	Environment	36,800.33
31,387.76	General Administration	38,216.08
700.00	Grants	745.40
8,628.06	Loan Repts	0.00
11,922.71	Mayor's Charity	19,749.11
14,937.53	Parish Hall	20,870.79
206,398.65	Personnel	245,790.26
447.05	Civic Hospitality	125.40
627.12	Cemetery Lodge	1,433.53
23,177.59	Cemetery	35,285.09
351,917.34	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	430,510.01
253,303.18	Balance as at 01/04/22	197,720.90
450,508.06	Add Total Income	539,416.97
703,811.24		737,137.87
351,917.34	Deduct Total Expenditure	430,510.01
0.00	Stock Adjustment	0.00
-154,173.00	Transfer to/from reserves	-95,232.77
197,720.90	Balance as at 31/03/23	211,395.09

CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET

31/03/23		Unaudited 31/03/24
£		£
	Long Term Assets	
0.00	LONG TERM Investment Accounts	0.00
<u>0.00</u>	TOTAL LONG TERM ASSETS	<u>0.00</u>
	Current assets	
0.00	Investments	0.00
0.00	Loans Made	0.00
0.00	Investment	0.00
9,617.07	VAT Recoverable	12,154.02
1,059.00	Debtors	636.75
6,111.91	Payment in Advance	6,031.18
506,370.65	Cash in Hand at Bank	611,022.15
<u>523,158.63</u>	TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	<u>629,844.10</u>
<u>523,158.63</u>	TOTAL ASSETS	<u>629,844.10</u>
	Current liabilities	
0.00	Loans Received	0.00
0.00	Temporary Borrowing	0.00
0.00	VAT Payable	0.00
14,716.20	Creditors	12,219.21
514.50	Receipts in Advance	790.00
<u>15,230.70</u>	TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	<u>13,009.21</u>
<u>507,927.93</u>	TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	<u>616,834.89</u>
0.00	Long Term Borrowing	0.00
0.00	Deferred Liabilities	0.00
0.00	Deferred Credits	0.00
<u>0.00</u>		<u>0.00</u>
<u>507,927.93</u>	NET ASSETS	<u>616,834.89</u>
	Represented by	
197,720.90	General Fund	211,395.09
10,481.56	Parish Hall Refurbishment	10,481.56
22,500.00	T Hill—Sedgefield Bowls Club	22,500.00
448.75	Mayor's Charity	13,001.46
202.95	Sedgefield 700+	202.95
275,000.00	Butterwick Cemetery Expansion	358,000.00
320.00	Community Chest	0.06
980.77	Refurbishment of Festive Lighting	980.77
0.00	Cemetery Lodge Refurbishment	0.00
273.00	Sedgefield Sowers and Growers Group	273.00
0.00	LONG TERM Investment Accounts	0.00
<u>0.00</u>	Liability Reserves e,g, deposits	<u>0.00</u>
<u>507,927.93</u>		<u>616,834.89</u>

Town Council Staff

SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES

Front Street, Sedgfield TS21 3AT

01740 621273



Jane Ayre, Town Clerk



Julia Rowsby, Financial Assistant



Jane Tate, Admin Assistant/
Mayor's Secretary



Natalie Chowns-Traynor,
Projects & Media Co-ordinator



Adam Heath, Receptionist &
Parish Hall Support Assistant



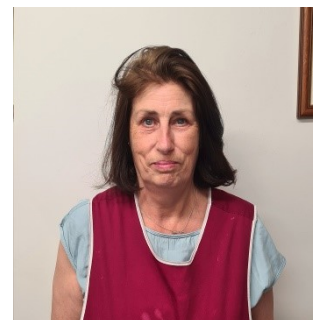
Stephen Young, Head Gardener
& Cemetery Superintendent



Kate Lawson, Gardener



Joyce Stephenson, Parish Hall
Caretaker & Cleaner



Helen Reeder, Parish Hall
Weekend Relief Officer



Sedgefield

A short, yet delightful 3-mile walk. Our Sedgefield H100 is a great starter walk for those just beginning their walking journeys. This flat route is easily achievable for most people.

Starting at the picturesque 13th Century Church of St Edmunds the route leads you out of the town, past the cricket club to the stunning Hardwick Park, abundant with natural beauty, woodland, wildlife and amazing sculptures. Leaving the main park area, the route circles the impressive lake before leaving the park where you entered. The route then follows the open grasslands with views of the church in the distance, ending back in the heart of the market town where you can explore many of the local businesses that produce quality products.

Distance: 4.9 km (3 miles)

Difficulty Rating: ★★★★★

WALK SPONSOR

GET IN TOUCH IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SPONSOR A WALK

