

Chesham Town Council



**Performance Plan
2009/10**

Contents

Introduction	1
About Chesham Town Council	2
Strategic Objectives	4
Chesham Community Vision	4
Public Consultation and Feedback	5
Council Tax 2009/10	6
Net Expenditure 2008/09	7
Renewals and Repairs Programme	8
Projects in 2008/09	
Elgiva On-Line Booking System	10
Cemetery 150th Anniversary Leaflet	11
Chesham Moor Gym & Swim Solar Panels Installation	12
Lowndes Park Green Flag Application	13
Meades Water Gardens Accessibility	14
Marston Field Pavilion Rebuild	15
Projects for 2009/10	
Lowndes Park Toddlers' Play Area Regeneration	17
Chesham 2012	18
Bowl Barrow Surveying	19
Our Services, Performance in 2008/09 and Targets for 2009/10	
Corporate Performance Indicators	20
Allotments	20
Parks, Open Spaces and Playgrounds	21
The Elgiva	23
The Town Hall	25
Sports Pavilions and Playing Fields	26
Chesham Moor Gym & Swim	27
Chesham Cemetery and Closed Churchyard	28
Democratic Services and Corporate Management	29
Environmental Performance	31
Appendices	
Appendix One – Calendar of Meetings of the Council and Committees 2009/10	
Appendix Two – Staffing Structure	
Appendix Three – Chesham Community Vision	
Appendix Four – Chesham Town Councillors' Contact Details	

Performance Plan 2009/10 – An Introduction

This plan sets out the following:

- the Town Council's objectives
- the services we provide to achieve our objectives
- the cost of these services, including a comparison of performance against performance indicators
- summaries of major projects undertaken in the past year
- proposed projects for the coming year

How We Monitor Performance

A Performance Review Committee, composed of Councillors, oversees the performance of the Council. The committee meets quarterly to assess the council's performance against the targets and performance indicators (PIs) specified in this annual performance plan. The committee also oversees any reviews of specific services provided by the Council.

The majority of PIs used within this plan were agreed in 2004 in consultation with other town and parish councils, as appropriate general indicators of council performance, with additional PIs included over time to encompass the expanding role of the Council. Within the plan, the performance of the Council is compared with the previous year's performance and the target to enable improvements to be easily identified. Where there are exceptional differences between years, or between actual performance and the target, these are explained.

The Council's performance is also measured in terms of public satisfaction with services. A door-to-door survey is conducted every five years and the results are published separately to this plan. The next satisfaction survey is due in 2010.

About Chesham Town Council

Chesham Town Council is the parish authority for the town of Chesham. With a population of 20,350 (2001 census), it is the largest parish in Chiltern District. Chesham Town Council's mission statement is:

“To improve the quality of life of the residents of Chesham.”

To achieve this we aim to:

- take part in an open dialogue with residents to better understand their needs, and in turn explain how we will address these needs within the resources and powers available to the Town Council;
- provide high standard, cost-effective services to help meet the needs and wishes of the residents;
- assist and encourage other bodies to provide such services; and
- promote the best interests of the town for the benefit of the local community.

To fulfil its mission, the Town Council supplements the provision of local government services in Chesham and provides a wide range of social and recreational facilities, while promoting the town in its representations to other bodies. The Town Council works in partnership with the larger Chiltern District Council, which covers the towns of Chesham, Amersham and surrounding villages. The District Council is responsible for local plans and development control, car parking, housing, environmental health and rubbish collection. The Town Council also works in partnership with Buckinghamshire County Council, which covers the whole of Buckinghamshire except Milton Keynes. The County Council is responsible for education, social services, highways, strategic planning and libraries. Our other partners include: Chesham Chamber of Trade and Commerce, Chesham Society, Town Twinning Association, Chilterns Conservation Board, Chesham Action Partnership and other agencies and voluntary bodies working together to improve service delivery or resolve local problems.

The Town Council has 19 Town Councillors, elected for a term of four years. The last Town Council elections were held in May 2007. The Chairman of the Council, who also undertakes the office of Town Mayor, is elected annually by the Councillors in May, together with a Deputy Town Mayor.

Town Councillors are unpaid and, with the exception of the Mayor, do not receive any attendance allowance or payments for their duties, which they undertake purely on a voluntary basis.

The Town Council has a committee structure with four main standing committees: Development Control, Performance Review, Policy and Resources and Recreation and the Arts.

Agendas for all meetings are available to the public at least three clear days before the meeting date at the Town Hall, on the Council website (www.chesham.gov.uk) and at Chesham Library in Elgiva Lane. Meetings are held at the Town Hall, Chesham and the public is encouraged to attend. A calendar of meetings of the Council and its standing committees from May 2009 to May 2010 is shown in Appendix 1.

The Town Council appoints representatives to the following charitable bodies:

Chesham Town Picture Fund, Francis Trust
Duke of Bedford's Trust
John Cheyney's Charity
Ken Denham Trust
Rachel Johnson's Eleemosynary
Milk Hall (John Gawdrey's Charity)
Weedon's Almshouses Charity Trust

The Town Council awarded donations in 2008/09 to 31 local organisations.

The Town Council employs a team of 17 full-time staff and 11 permanent, part-time staff headed by the Town Clerk, Bill Richards. This is supplemented by the use of a number of temporary/casual staff. The Town Council's staffing structure is shown in Appendix 2.

Strategic Objectives

The Town Council's strategic objectives are based on the Council's overall vision. The objectives are:

1. To enable residents to enjoy high-quality social, recreational, and cultural facilities within the town and to seek the continuing improvement and development of these facilities in accordance with the desires expressed by the residents.
2. To encourage and promote the economic and commercial vitality of the town.
3. To preserve the unique identity of Chesham and promote its heritage.
4. To ensure that harmony exists between commercial and residential requirements.
5. To consult with and take due regard of all comments received from other statutory bodies, voluntary organisations and individuals, to ensure an improving standard of service that meets with local needs.
6. To represent the views and wishes of the citizens of Chesham.
7. To help create a socially inclusive and caring community, which embraces all its residents equally, seeking to develop their well-being, knowledge, understanding, and mutual co-operation.

Chesham Community Vision

The Town Council is also working with the Chesham Action Partnership to fulfil the objectives defined in the Chesham Community Vision, launched in December 2005. As the town's official Market Town Health-check, we are a key partner in its delivery.

The Chesham Community Vision has produced its own vision (see Appendix 3) for 2015 which is:

"An active and vibrant working market town with an integrated but varied community where people support one another and can live, work, shop, visit and enjoy themselves in an environment that is constantly cared for and enhanced. A town that:

- Provides sustainable employment opportunities, housing and business facilities that respect the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in which it is situated.
- Encourages young and old from all areas to work together to achieve continual improvement to the facilities and future prospects of the town.
- Promotes a thriving town centre which provides leisure and shopping facilities to meet the needs and wishes of residents and visitors.
- Has a fully linked transport and communication system providing good services for people to travel within the town and regular connections to London and surrounding towns and villages."

The key values identified by the Chesham Community Vision are:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| - A town of character | - A vibrant social mix |
| - A solid community infrastructure | - Regeneration of the High Street |
| - A sound local economy | - Improved communication |
| - Best access to services | - A strong sense of community |
| - An integrated community | - Easy accessibility to green open spaces |
| - Better choice of shops | - Linking of education, training and employment |
| - Integrated transport system | |

Public Consultation and Feedback

Underlying our strategic objectives is the need to consult the community. The Town Council is the first tier of local government, closest to its community. We fully endorse our duty and in 2007 adopted a Consultation Policy and Procedure to ensure that we carry out appropriate consultation in an inclusive and effective manner. The Council will:

- put consultation at the heart of its service delivery
- be clear about what it wishes to consult on, with whom and when
- ensure people know the standard of service they should expect
- be honest and open about what is, and what is not, possible
- encourage people to decide what services they want and how they would like them delivered, within existing constraints
- aim to engage all sections of the community
- make consultation an integral part of improving service delivery
- promote consultation good practice with partners

In addition to the **door-to-door survey** carried out every five years to ascertain residents' views, the Council runs satisfaction surveys and other forms of consultation on specific services and issues on an ad hoc basis. We also produce quarterly, free **newsletters** and the annual **Town Guide** as a means of regular communication with residents. The council **web site**, www.chesham.gov.uk, provides up-to-date contact information for the Council and Councillors, listings of Council services, news and events, plus policy documents and committee agendas, reports and minutes. The public can contact the Council via a dynamic enquiry form on the web site.

Councillors have a key role in consultation because they bring to Council the views, concerns and ideas of their constituents. The Council allows 15 minutes before the beginning of every meeting of Council for **Public Question Time**. During this time the public may question the Council on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties, or which affects the town. The **Annual Town Meeting** in May is another means of consulting the public. This forum enables town issues to be freely debated. The Council also holds **Local Council Open Surgeries** for members of the public to meet and discuss any issues with Town, District and County Councillors representing Chesham and the surrounding area.

The Council has established **focus groups** to consult with our users on the services we provide. These discussion groups are the Allotments Group, Elgiva Board of Management, Chesham Environmental Group, Friends of Chesham Cemetery, Friends of Lowndes Park, Friends of Chesham Moor Gym & Swim and the Impress the Chess Group.

Finally, the Council communicates and invites feedback via **media releases** to the local press and radio; and through talks by Council officers to local organisations, clubs and societies.

What Do You Think?

We welcome your views on this Performance Plan. Comments, queries, complaints and compliments regarding the services we provide can be made:

In person to the Town Hall or by **telephone** on 01494 774842 between the hours of 10am-4.30pm, Monday to Friday.

By **Letter** to The Town Clerk, Chesham Town Council, Town Hall, Chesham, HP5 1DS or by writing to your local Town Councillor. A full list of Councillors and their contact details is shown in Appendix 4 at the end of this Plan.

By **Fax** : 01494 582908

By **E-mail** : townclerk@chesham.gov.uk

By **Web site** via Contact Us: http://www.chesham.gov.uk/DynamicEnquiry/Contact_Us.aspx

Council Tax 2009/10

The Council Tax paid by Chesham residents includes the spending requirements of Buckinghamshire County Council, Chiltern District Council, Thames Valley Police, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority and Chesham Town Council. The District Council is responsible for collecting your Council Tax on behalf of all five authorities. Chesham Town Council **does not receive** revenue support from Central Government, unlike the District and County Councils. Neither is funding received from local businesses and retailers through their Non Domestic Rate. This is collected by the District Council on behalf of the government, reallocated and paid back to the District Council in the form of a grant.

Chesham Town Council is funded by Chesham householders and from the income generated from services such as the Elgiva, letting income from the Town Hall and other fees and charges. Each year, the Town Council calculates the money it needs to raise to provide its services. Then we deduct the income collectable from our activities to leave an amount we require to spend on these services for the year ahead. This sum, called the precept, is the amount the District Council collects on our behalf as a proportion of the total Council Tax paid by Chesham residents. This year, ending 31 March 2010, our precept will be £789,150. Therefore, if you live in an average Band D house, you will be contributing £94.60 (an increase of 3.9%) of your total Council Tax Bill of £1,515.78 to Chesham Town Council in 2009/10.

The net cost of the Town Council's precept can be summarised as follows:

Service	Estimate 2009/10 £
Administration and Democratic Services	173,115
Allotments	12,385
Cemetery and Churchyard	74,110
Housing	(6,290)
Parks and Open Spaces	224,745
Sports Pavilions and Pitches	22,555
Open Air Swimming Pool & Leisure Facilities at The Moor	95,480
The Elgiva	166,010
Town Centre Revitalisation	31,740
Town Hall	37,950
Lowndes Park Toilets	16,895
Net cost of Services	848,695
Contribution to/(from) Reserves	(59,545)
Precept	789,150

Net Expenditure 2008/09

The below table provides a detailed summary of the Council's net expenditure for 2008/09, compared with the budgeted expenditure. In the Statutory Final Accounts, which are made publicly available, the figures will be adjusted for Capital charges.

Service	Net Budgeted Expenditure £	Net Actual Expenditure £	Explanation of differences over 15%
COST CENTRE			
Central Support Services – recharged to services	0	0	
Civic Activities	10,880	10,348	
CCTV	0	(120)	donation
Cemetery	48,395	61,828	Increased maintenance (new staffing structure) and lower income
Closed Churchyard	2,520	2,555	
Interest	(30,000)	(30,091)	
Housing	(8,540)	(8,660)	
Corporate Management	99,360	89,381	
Democratic Management	76,010	74,197	
Section 137 Expenses	7,270	9,106	Increased free use grants and balance of environmental bags
Chesham Moor Swim and Gym	66,095	70,431	
Codmore Field	7,345	7,366	
Marston Field	11,240	2,260	Pavilion scheme delayed
Community College	1,030	1,368	Grant payment dates changed
Amenities	36,990	30,864	Dog bin costs and tree works reallocated
Open Spaces	149,325	137,349	
Lowndes Park Toilets	16,760	15,356	
Agency Work	(2,840)	(8,326)	Market management fee
Skatepark Noise Abatement	2,925	2,690	
Works Depot – recharged	0	0	
The Elgiva	135,190	121,972	Staff costs and increased income
Temperance Hall	(100)	(100)	
Town Hall	31,155	25,675	Increased hire income
Allotments	17,010	9,911	Reduced Maintenance
Town Centre Revitalisation	29,245	25,580	
RESERVES			
Renewal and Repairs	107,840	107,840	
Net cost of services	815,105	758,780	
Appropriation to (from) Reserves	(56,307)	18	
Precept	758,798	758,798	

Renewals and Repairs Programme

	2008/09 * ESTIMATE £	2008/9 REVISED £	2009/10 ESTIMATE £	2010/11 ESTIMATEEE £
EXPENDITURE				
Allotments fence	1,000	-	500	500
Computer/office equipment	3,500	5,500	3,500	3,500
Franking Machine	-	-	1,500	-
Elgiva-Includes new booking system	23,000	42,190**	20,000	20,000
Town Hall	31,000	10,000	15,000	20,000
Swing replacement – cradle	9,000	-	-	-
Play equipment – Swings-Gordon Road,etc	8,000	-	-	-
Play equipment – Codmore	8,000	-	-	-
Play equipment – Marston Field	12,760	-	-	-
Play equipment-Woodland View	-	-	-	-
Play Equipment -General	50,240	40,000	40,000	40,000
Skate park Resurface (5 years 2010)	-	-	-	15,000
Play equipment – fencing (Windsor Road /Batchelors Way/Bois Hill/Codmore)	19,700	-	-	-
Seats	2,800	2,800	1,500	1,500
Litter bins	3,100	3,100	1,500	700
Paths – Lowndes Park pond	30,000	30,000	-	-
Paths – Red Lion Street Gardens	5,500	5,500	-	-
Moor Hard standings	4,000	-	5,000	500
General fencing (Meades/Bury Lane/Lowndes Park/Codmore)	8,500	1,000	-	2,000
Information Boards – Allots/Cemetery/Station Rd	1,970	1,970	1,000	-
Bus shelters	-	-	-	-
Depot main building-doors/ driveway	4,000	4,000	6,500	6,500
Harrows/mowers	3,500	3,500	-	-
Tractor/Trailers	-	-	9,200	15,000
Marston pavilion	17,000	17,000	300,000	-
Codmore car park	15,000	15,000	-	-
Codmore Pavilion – redecoration, etc.	2,500	2,500	-	2,000
Cemetery Lodges 2011	5,000	-	-	-
Cemetery walls/fences	14,000	7,000	7,000	7,000
Cemetery Chapel – chairs	-	-	-	-
Cemetery Chapel – renovation	6,200	300	6,500	-
Cemetery roads	-	-	-	-
Cemetery paths	5,000	-	-	10,000
Cemetery Hearse House/toilets	-	4,000	-	-
St. Mary's Walls / trees	5,000	-	5,000	-
Christmas lights	12,000	12,000	2,000	7,000
Swimming Pools	10,000	25,000	10,000	10,000
Multi-Courts	50,000	50,000	-	-
War Memorial Path	-	-	700	-
Moor Marsh	5,000	5,000	-	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	376,270	287,360	436,400	161,200

	2008/09 ESTIMATE £	2008/09 REVISED £	2009/10 ESTIMATE £	2010/11 ESTIMATE £
BALANCES BROUGHT FORWARD:				
Capital –Marston Pavilion	17,000	17,000	-	-
Renewal & Repairs	267,115	267,115	125,785	102,000
INCOME:				
Precept contributions	107,840	107,840	111,615	115,000
Christmas Lighting –Town Centre Consortium	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
CVSLA Funds	-	1,000	-	-
P.W.L.B/Grants -(Split 50/50)			300,000	
Transfer from Elgiva Reserve		19,190**		
TOTAL	392,955	413,145	538,400	218,000
LESS EXPENDITURE SHOWN ABOVE		287,360	436,400	161,200
BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD		125,785	102,000	56,800

** Part funded from Elgiva Reserve

Projects in 2008/09

1. Elgiva On-Line Booking System

Project summary:

Prior to the installation of the on-line booking system, theatre and cinema tickets for the Elgiva could be purchased in person at the Box Office, over the phone, by post, or reservations could be made by email. Box Office opening hours are 10am to 3pm, Monday to Saturday. The on-line booking system went live during June 2008 and offers customers the flexibility of purchasing tickets 24-hours a day, seven days a week.

After advice from the service provider, it was predicted that the on-line service would account for 10% of our annual business. However, not only has this been achieved, but surpassed, whereby currently nearly 30% of all income is taken on-line and 23% of all transactions are undertaken on-line. This has helped alleviate any issues with customers having difficulty booking. The management believes that as with all other businesses, the percentage of on-line booking will only increase over the coming years. It is for this reason that the Elgiva plans to invest in a tailored on-line marketing package. As to when the Elgiva purchases this marketing package, this will depend on two major issues. Firstly, once we have collected and collated enough information to make it worthwhile and secondly, when it is felt financially appropriate to do so.

How does the project meet the Council's objectives?

Strategic Objective	How the Project meets the Objective
To enable residents to enjoy high-quality social, recreational, and cultural facilities within the town and to seek the continuing improvement and development of these facilities in accordance with the desires expressed by the residents.	The on-line booking system provides greater access to performances and screenings at the Elgiva. On-line booking is helping to encourage different types of clientele to the theatre.
To consult with and take due regard of all comments received from other statutory bodies, voluntary organisations and individuals, to ensure an improving standard of service that meets with local needs.	Consultation with Elgiva customers and arts organisations, including theatre groups, as part of the 2007/08 Best Value review of the Elgiva identified a demand for on-line booking.

How does the project meet the aims of the Chesham Community Vision?

Vision Statement and Key Values	How the Project meets the Objective
A town that promotes a thriving town centre which provides leisure and shopping facilities to meet the needs and wishes of residents and visitors.	Installation of the on-line booking system has increased accessibility to the Elgiva, which is one of the town centre's major leisure facilities.
Best access to services	The new system has resulted in a significant improvement in accessibility to the Elgiva's services.

Total Project Costs: £21,900

2. Cemetery 150th Anniversary Leaflet

Project summary:

Chesham's cemetery was inaugurated in 1858 to provide a burial place for Chesham residents following the closure of St. Mary's churchyard. To commemorate the 150 year anniversary, the Town Council worked with the Friends of Chesham Cemetery to produce a booklet about the cemetery.

In 2008, the Council and Friends published a 36-page, full-colour, glossy booklet outlining the history of the cemetery land from prehistory to the current day. The chapters include an explanation of how the cemetery came to be established, the cemetery facilities, interesting historical facts and the wildlife that inhabits the cemetery.

During the 2008 Heritage Weekend, the cemetery Chapel was open to the public and the newly published booklet was made available. The Friends also held an exhibition in the Chapel and provided tours of the cemetery.

The booklet is available from Chesham Town Hall and any donations received are passed to the Friends of Chesham Cemetery to support their on-going conservation and maintenance work.

How does the project meet the Council's objectives?

Strategic Objective	How the Project meets the Objective
To enable residents to enjoy high-quality social, recreational, and cultural facilities within the town and to seek the continuing improvement and development of these facilities in accordance with the desires expressed by the residents.	The booklet provides interpretation on the cemetery for residents, visitors, genealogists and those who use the cemetery for recreation.
To preserve the unique identity of Chesham and promote its heritage.	The history of the cemetery was previously poorly understood. Considerable research of historic documents was undertaken in the production of this booklet, which provides easy access to the origins of the cemetery.

How does the project meet the aims of the Chesham Community Vision?

Vision Statement and Key Values	How the Project meets the Objective
A town that encourages young and old from all areas to work together to achieve continual improvement to the facilities and future prospects of the town.	The Town Council worked with the Friends of Chesham Cemetery on this project, who are a voluntary group of residents who are working to improve the cemetery.
Easy accessibility to green open spaces.	The booklet has helped to raise awareness and increase understanding of the cemetery, one of the largest green open spaces in town.

Total Project Costs: £1,300

External Funding Raised: £1,500 from Chiltern District Council, £200 from Chesham Society, £200 from Chesham Mosque and £100 from Church View Funeral Services.
(Excess funding will be put towards other projects in the cemetery.)

3. Chesham Moor Gym & Swim Solar Panels Installation

Project summary:

Installation of solar panels at Chesham Moor Gym & Swim would provide thermal heating of water for the pool and showers. The installation of solar panels accords with the Town Council's Environmental Policy to 'Use energy, natural resources, and non-renewable resources efficiently and strive to minimise water and pollution'. It is estimated that harnessing solar energy may provide a budget saving of 50-70% of current gas consumption, and may also provide a reduction in energy consumption.

During 2008, the Council worked with the Friends of Chesham Moor Gym & Swim to identify the most appropriate solar technology for the centre and began the process of applying for a Low Carbon Buildings Phase 2 (LCB-2) grant to cover 50% of the installation costs. Unfortunately, substantial problems were encountered in finding contractors willing to engage in the LCB-2 process, halting any further progress with the project.

Regrettably the Department for Business, Enterprise & Regulatory Reform (BERR) is ceasing with its 50% grant scheme in June 2009, and due to the difficulties previously explained the Council will not be in a position to apply for a grant before the deadline. Accordingly, the Council is investigating other local suppliers and the possibility of getting an interest free loan from Buckinghamshire County Council to help with the costs.

In April 2009, a new boiler was installed at Chesham Moor Gym & Swim, as the old boiler was coming to the end of its natural life. This more efficient model will result in some reduction in gas consumption.

How does the project meet the Council's objectives?

Strategic Objective	How the Project meets the Objective
To enable residents to enjoy high-quality social, recreational, and cultural facilities within the town and to seek the continuing improvement and development of these facilities in accordance with the desires expressed by the residents.	Installation of a solar panel heating system will be a significant development to the Moor Swim & Gym facilities, reducing the pool's non-renewable energy consumption.
To preserve the unique identity of Chesham and promote its heritage.	Chesham has a strong history of open air swimming and there has been a formal pool on the Moor Gym & Swim site since the late 19th century.

How does the project meet the aims of the Chesham Community Vision?

Vision Statement and Key Values	How the Project meets the Objective
A town of character	Many open air pools around the UK have closed in the last few decades. The historic open air pool contributes to Chesham's heritage and character. Reducing the pool's energy costs will help its long-term sustainability.
A solid community infrastructure	The open air pool forms an important part of the leisure infrastructure of the town.

4. Lowndes Park Green Flag Application

Project summary:

The Green Flag award scheme, operated by the Civic Trust, is the national standard for parks in England. In 2008, Lowndes Park was awarded Green Flag status, demonstrating that the park has high standards in the following areas: environmental sustainability, security, maintenance, conservation, heritage and community involvement. In their feedback, the judges said that the park is being managed sympathetically with due regard to the environment and in a manner that conserves the park's landscape features. The judges also praised the Council and Friends of Lowndes Park for their encouragement of community involvement in the park's development.

How does the project meet the Council's objectives?

Strategic Objective	How the Project meets the Objective
To enable residents to enjoy high-quality social, recreational, and cultural facilities within the town and to seek the continuing improvement and development of these facilities in accordance with the desires expressed by the residents.	The awarding of the Green Flag demonstrated that Lowndes Park and its facilities have reached a national standard of excellence.
To preserve the unique identity of Chesham and promote its heritage.	'Conservation and Heritage' is a key criterion of the Green Flag Award. The judges stated that the Lowndes Park Management Plan, which has a section devoted to the conservation of the park's heritage, demonstrates an understanding of the site and its features and provides information on the actions to be taken to maintain and further enhance the site.

How does the project meet the aims of the Chesham Community Vision?

Vision Statement and Key Values	How the Project meets the Objective
A town that promotes a thriving town centre which provides leisure and shopping facilities to meet the needs and wishes of residents and visitors.	The Green Flag Award shows that the Town Council is providing first class leisure facilities in the town centre.
Easy accessibility to green open spaces.	The central location of the park provides easy access to a high quality open space for recreation.

Total Project Costs: £175

5. Meades Water Gardens Accessibility

Project summary:

Following the major regeneration of the gardens in 2007/08 additional work was conducted in 2008/09 to improve accessibility to, and within, the gardens. Following consultation with residents with disabilities and reduced mobility, the footpaths in Meades Water Gardens were upgraded to provide a surface more suited to users with limited mobility and those using wheelchairs and pushchairs.

At the narrowest section of the footpath, which was particularly difficult to use due to the muddy surface and a proliferation of tree roots, a wooden boardwalk was installed. Thanks to a £2,450 grant from the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Sustainable Development Fund, the boardwalk provides easy access to the gardens for pedestrians, whilst protecting the natural riverbank habitat for the benefit of wildlife such as water voles.

How does the project meet the Council's objectives?

Strategic Objective	How the Project meets the Objective
To enable residents to enjoy high-quality social, recreational, and cultural facilities within the town and to seek the continuing improvement and development of these facilities in accordance with the desires expressed by the residents.	This latest phase of the Meades Water Gardens project enables all residents to gain access to the newly restored gardens and sees a significant improvement in the standard of the facilities provided.
To consult with and take due regard of all comments received from other statutory bodies, voluntary organisations and individuals, to ensure an improving standard of service that meets with local needs.	The footpath upgrading was conducted in response to consultation with residents and other users of the gardens.
To help create a socially inclusive and caring community, which embraces all its residents equally, seeking to develop their well-being knowledge, understanding and mutual co-operation.	Upgrading the footpaths and installation of the boardwalk means accessibility to the whole site for people with disabilities, reduced mobility and users with pushchairs and prams.

How does the project meet the aims of the Chesham Community Vision?

Vision Statement and Key Values	How the Project meets the Objective
Best access to services.	The upgrading work provides easy access to a key green space in the town centre.
Easy accessibility to green open spaces.	Meades Water Gardens is a small, flat site in the town centre, making it ideal for use for exercise and relaxation. Enhanced accessibility means that this facility is now accessible for all.

Total Project Costs: £9678.48

External Funding Raised: £2,450 - Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Sustainable Development Fund, £300 from County Councillor Mrs Patricia Lindsley

6. Marston Field Pavilion Re-build

Project summary:

Marston field is an 8-acre playing field located in Ridgeway Ward. The field has football pitches, a multi-use games area and an enclosed children's play area. Marston Pavilion was damaged by fire following an arson attack in 2006. The Town Council recognises the need for decent sports facilities and a community meeting place in the Ridgeway area. The Council convened a Marston Pavilion Steering Group with the objective of developing a state-of-the-art football changing facility that accommodates a community area.

The re-building of the facility, estimated to be in the region of £350,000, will be reliant on external funding. To obtain a significant amount of external funding from the main funder for this type of project, the Football Foundation, a comprehensive football development plan will need to be devised to show how a large proportion of Chesham's diverse community will be able to access the facility. The Council is working hard with a number of partners including Chiltern District Council, Paradigm Housing, Pond Park Community Association and the Berks and Bucks FA to try and ensure that it would be eligible for a grant. Plans to provide a large scale community centre have had to be dropped following the planning authority's insistence that the pavilion could not exceed its previous footprint size.

How does the project meet the Council's objectives?

Strategic Objective	How the Project meets the Objective
To enable residents to enjoy high-quality social, recreational, and cultural facilities within the town and to seek the continuing improvement and development of these facilities in accordance with the desires expressed by the residents.	The new pavilion will provide modern facilities to suit the recreational needs of residents in the Ridgeway area.
To consult with and take due regard of all comments received from other statutory bodies, voluntary organisations and individuals, to ensure an improving standard of service that meets with local needs.	The Marston Pavilion Steering Group includes representatives from the local community to ensure that there is adequate consultation on the project.
To help create a socially inclusive and caring community, which embraces all its residents equally, seeking to develop their well-being knowledge, understanding and mutual co-operation.	The development of the new pavilion will provide a much needed sporting and community facility in one of the more deprived areas of Chesham, promoting positive recreational activities for the young and community involvement for all.

How does the project meet the aims of the Chesham Community Vision?

Vision Statement and Key Values	How the Project meets the Objective
A solid community infrastructure.	Provision for sport across the town is vital for the well-being of our children. Development of a modern football changing facility forms part of the community's recreational infrastructure.
Best access to services.	The new facility will provide access to high quality facilities for residents in Ridgeway Ward.
A strong sense of community	The pavilion will accommodate a small community area to help foster a sense of community.

Total Project Costs: £350,000 (*latest estimate*)

External Funding Raised: £0 to date

Projects for 2009/10

1. Lowndes Park Toddlers' Play Area Regeneration

Project summary:

The toddler and junior play area within Lowndes Park will be renovated. The new equipment will provide a single & double multi-play unit, cradle seat swing, gyro spiral and pod swing. An 'Enviromulch' impact absorption surface will also be installed under the equipment and the site will be terraced and landscaped.

How will the project meet the Council's objectives?

Strategic Objective	How the Project meets the Objective
To enable residents to enjoy high-quality social, recreational, and cultural facilities within the town and to seek the continuing improvement and development of these facilities in accordance with the desires expressed by the residents.	The re-development of the play area, funded almost entirely through the government's 'Play Builder' grant scheme, will give younger residents a much needed enhanced play experience within the centre of town.
To consult with and take due regard of all comments received from other statutory bodies, voluntary organisations and individuals, to ensure an improving standard of service that meets with local needs.	Comments received from residents through the Council's Play Area survey and at a Play Consultation event showed the popularity of the Toddlers' Play Area and contributed to its prioritisation for regeneration. Residents were also able to comment on potential designs and contribute their own ideas.

How will the project meet the aims of the Chesham Community Vision?

Vision Statement and Key Values	How the Project meets the Objective
Accessibility to green open spaces	Lowndes Park is central to the Council's Green Spaces policy and the sensitivity of the design will enhance the Park further.
A sense of community	The enhanced play-area will bring families together within the centre of town.

2. Chesham 2012

Project summary:

A range of sports activities with an 'Olympic' theme will be organised predominantly at the Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre for the three years leading up to the 2012 Games in London.

How will the project meet the Council's objectives?

Strategic Objective	How the Project meets the Objective
To enable residents to enjoy high-quality social, recreational, and cultural facilities within the town and to seek the continuing improvement and development of these facilities in accordance with the desires expressed by the residents.	A range of sporting activities leading up to the London Olympics will allow all sections of the community to participate in sports they may have previously been denied access to.
To encourage and promote the economic and commercial vitality of the town.	Chesham 2012 should raise the profile of the town and attract visitors within the area as 2012 approaches.

How will the project meet the aims of the Chesham Community Vision?

Vision Statement and Key Values	How the Project meets the Objective
A sense of community.	The diverse nature of activities planned will engage all sections of the community.
A town of character	It will give the town a sense of identity and purpose leading up to 2012.

3. Bowl Barrow Surveying

Project summary:

Working with the Chess Valley Archaeological and Historical Society, undertake geophysical surveying (geophys) of the bowl barrow in Lowndes Park to ascertain whether the bowl barrow is Bronze Age in origin and to investigate the nearby site of an ancient burial ground.

How will the project meet the Council's objectives?

Strategic Objective	How the Project meets the Objective
To preserve the unique identity of Chesham and promote its heritage.	Confirms the ancient history of the town and enhances the bowl barrow's status as a Scheduled Ancient Monument.
To encourage and promote the economic and commercial vitality of the town	More definite historic knowledge would undoubtedly attract more visitors to the Park and also, inevitably, retail and refreshment outlets in the town.

How will the project meet the aims of the Chesham Community Vision?

Vision Statement and Key Values	How the Project meets the Objective
A town of character	Highlights the ancient history of the town and will provide a greater understanding of the town's early history.

Our Services, Performance 2008/09, and Targets for 2009/10

This section of the Plan explains the Council's aims and objectives and performance measures for each of the services we provide.

Corporate Performance Indicators

The following Performance Indicators, shown below, represent a measure of our corporate performance.

Performance Indicator Corporate	Target 2007/08	Actual 2007/08	Target 2008/09	Actual 2008/09	Target 2009/10
Cost of all Town Council services per elector per annum	£46.24	£44.06	£51.71	£48.14	£53.32
Percentage attendance by Councillors at meetings of the Council, including standing committees	80.0%	79.3%	80.0%	72.1%	80.0%
Percentage of correspondence dealt with within 7 days	90.0%	98.0%	90.0%	95.0%	90.0%

The remaining pages of this section deal specifically with the services we provide.

Allotments

The Council's service objective is:

to provide allotments where a demand exists, in keeping with our statutory obligation.

The service we provide...

The Council altogether owns 232 plots, spread across Asheridge Road (46 plots); Amersham Road (6 plots) and Cameron Road (180 plots).

Performance Indicator Allotments	Target 2007/08	Actual 2007/08	Target 2008/09	Actual 2008/09	Target 2009/10
Cost to the Council per elector	£0.98	£0.70	£1.08	£0.63	£0.74
Income to the Council per hectare of workable allotment land	£778.93	£813.35	£778.93	£833.23	£814.54
Percentage of uncultivated allotment land	2.5%	2.0%	2.5%	0.0%	2.5%

Annual summary of Allotments

The popularity of the allotments continues, with all three sites being fully tenanted and a waiting list of prospective tenants on all three sites.

After the Council granted the Allotments Group the use of a plot on the Cameron Road site as a focal point for communal activities, the Group have built a shed to serve as a gathering place for tenants. Activities at the focal point include regular and popular Saturday coffee mornings. The allotments at Cameron Road were the starting point for the Royal Horticultural Society's visit to the town for Chesham's entry into the Thames and Chilterns in Bloom competition and contributed to the achievement of a Silver Award.

Parks, Open Spaces and Playgrounds

The Council's service objective is:

to satisfy the requirement to provide good social and recreational facilities.

The service we provide...

The Council owns, and maintains, jointly with external contractors, approximately 88 acres of Parks, Gardens and Open Spaces at the following 17 locations within Chesham:

- **Lowndes Park** - an area of some 36 acres. The Lower Park was a gift to the town by the Lowndes family in 1953. Its main features include Skottowe's Pond, children's play areas, a skatepark and multi-sports court, a family tree planting scheme, Sovereign Coppice and the bowl barrow scheduled ancient monument. Also the location for the annual Schools of Chesham Carnival and summer open-air concerts.
- **Meades Water Gardens** - formerly disused watercress beds, a 3 acre wildlife habitat and recreation area including a stretch of the River Chess, regenerated in 2007/08.
- **Chesham Moor** - formerly the town's Victorian domestic refuse site, now an attractive stretch of common land of some 17 acres alongside the River Chess. Its main features include sports pitches, children's play equipment and Chesham Moor Swim & Gym.
- **Nashleigh Hill Recreation Ground** - a 9.5 acre open space. The site is used for circuses and small fun fairs. The park also accommodates a children's play area and a goal for informal recreational use.
- **Co-op Field** - a sloping 4 acre field, a popular location for tobogganing, with enclosed children's play area.
- **Marston Playing Field** - an 8 acre open space with enclosed children's play area and football pitches.
- **Codmore Playing Field** - a 7 acre open space with enclosed children's play area, football pitches and a cricket wicket.
- **Big Round Green** - an area of woodland leased to the Woodland Trust.
- **Manor Way Island** - a small area of open space in Manor Way.
- **Lye Green** - a small area of common land off Lye Green Road.
- **The Chalk Dell** - a small area of open space off Nashleigh Hill.
- **Batchelors Way** - an enclosed children's play area within an open space owned by Paradigm Housing.
- **Bois Moor Road** - an enclosed children's play area off Bois Moor Road.
- **Gordon Road** - a small children's play area off Gordon Road.
- **Hodds Wood Road** - an enclosed children's play area off Hodds Wood Road.
- **Windsor Road** - an enclosed children's play area within an open space owned by Chiltern District Council but maintained by this Council.
- **Woodland View** - an enclosed children's play area off Woodland View, with new equipment installed in 2007.

Performance Indicator Parks, Open Spaces, Playgrounds	Target 2007/08	Actual 2007/08	Target 2008/09	Actual 2008/09	Target 2009/10
Cost to the Council per elector	£10.69	£10.68	£12.01	£10.84	£11.95
Percentage of play equipment inspected and made safe within 24 hours of reported defect	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Percentage of sites visited and inspected weekly	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Annual summary of Parks, Open Spaces and Playgrounds

Following consultation with residents with disabilities and reduced mobility, the footpaths in Meades Water Gardens were upgraded to improve the accessibility of this wildlife site in the town centre. A boardwalk was installed at the narrowest point of the footpath to aid pedestrian accessibility, whilst safeguarding the riparian habitat for wildlife (see page 14 for more information).

In October 2008, the Council discovered that its >£1 million bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund's (HLF) Parks for People funding programme had been unsuccessful, despite HLF case officers recommending that the bid be approved. However, the work carried out by the council with the Friends of Lowndes Park to put the bid together has been vital in identifying what improvements should be made in the park. The council and Friends have worked to prioritise those projects to see what work can be carried out with existing funds and what other sources of funding can be obtained. The Friends have successfully passed Stage One of a Community Spaces grant application for £49,950 to regenerate the performance space above Skottowes Pond and provide a seasonal shelter for artistic performances held there.

In 2008-09 the Council consulted with the town's parents, grandparents, children's groups and young people on the town's play areas. Paper and e-surveys were popular, as was the "Play & Say" day held at the Town Hall where people were asked for their views on play area designs. Working with Proludic, a playground equipment specialist, the consultation has helped to inform the Council's Play Strategy and the first step in the regeneration of our play areas will be the refurbishment of the toddlers' play area in 2009 (detailed on page 17).

As part of Thames and Chilterns in Bloom, Chesham achieved a Silver award in 2008. The council's town centre floral displays, Meades Water Gardens and Lowndes Park were judged as part of the town's entry. Chesham also won first prize for the best town portfolio in the Thames and Chilterns.

The Elgiva

The Council's service objective is:

to ensure a varied programme of entertainment, social and cultural activities is available to all sections of the community.

The service we provide...

Built in 1998, the Elgiva (which replaced the former 22 year old venue based in Elgiva Lane) is owned and managed by Chesham Town Council. The venue provides a varied and popular range of entertainment including professional and amateur theatre productions, live music and one-nighters as well as a pantomime.

The Elgiva boasts the area's most hi-tech and advanced Dolby Digital Cinema and surround sound. A *What's On* brochure is published three times a year and distributed to over 60,000 homes in the area. The Elgiva also has its own web site, www.elgiva.com providing 24 hour access to cinema and theatre listings and on-line booking. The Elgiva provides a bar and there is also a franchised coffee shop/restaurant. The venue's tiered 300 seat auditorium can be quickly converted to a flat floor suitable for exhibitions, wedding receptions and parties, discos and rock concerts and art and craft fairs. A long stay 'pay and display' car park surrounds The Elgiva and is owned and managed by Chiltern District Council. The car park can accommodate 70 vehicles including 3 spaces for the registered disabled.

Performance Indicator The Elgiva	Target 2007/08	Actual 2007/08	Target 2008/09	Actual 2008/09	Target 2009/10
Cost to the Council per elector	£8.67	£7.72	£8.58	£7.74	£8.63
Income as a proportion of operating costs	71.8%	76.0%	73.9%	76.4%	74.6%
Number of patrons attending cinema performances	9,000	7,467	7,500	7,367	7,500
Number of patrons attending theatre performances	36,000	39,618	38,000	39,671	39,000
Average attendance – cinema (matinee)	12%	10%	10%	10%	10%
Average attendance – cinema (evening)	33%	26%	26%	25%	26%
Average attendance – theatre	65%	73%	70%	62%	65%

Annual summary of the Elgiva

Whilst the Elgiva has just completed a financially and artistically successful year, in line with theatres nationally, the Elgiva is currently experiencing a slight downturn in attendance. It is also clear that due to the current economic climate, people are being more selective and also waiting until the last minute to book for shows. Both of these issues make it difficult for the management to predict end results. To counteract any downturn, the team at the Elgiva plan to undertake extra cost effective marketing strategies, as well as keeping a tight rein on all expenditure. Only the absolute necessary maintenance will be undertaken in line with Health and Safety requirements but also, importantly, to ensure that the customer's impression of the Elgiva remains positive. To be successful we believe that we need to appear to be doing well, even when times are slightly more difficult.

An external Challenge Panel completed its review of the Elgiva in 2008. Consultation with service users demonstrated a high level of satisfaction from both users and hirers of the Elgiva and comparison with other venues highlighted its favourable artistic and financial performance. The review led the Panel to conclude that it was satisfied overall with the need for the service and the manner in which it is run by the Town Council. The Panel suggested a number of improvement measures, including the installation of an online booking system, which has been successfully undertaken (see page 10 for more information).

The Town Hall

The Council's service objective is:

to ensure high quality social, recreational and cultural facilities are available to all sections of the community.

The service we provide...

Opened in 1998, The Town Hall overlooks Lowndes Park and is accessible on foot from the High Street through Baines Walk or by car through Star Yard Car Park, off Blucher Street. The venue boasts a ground floor community hall with seating capacity for 110 and adjoining kitchen facilities. There is full disabled access to the first floor and the Lowndes Room, which can seat up to 50, and has its own private kitchen. The Council Chamber, which is ideal for conferences and training courses can accommodate up to 100 delegates. There is a small meeting room, which can seat eight people. The venue offers a laptop, data projector, delegate microphone hiring facility and wireless internet connection. The Town Hall is used extensively by a wide range of clubs, societies and community organisations as well as local companies for business meetings, including AGMs, and training. It is the town's only licensed venue for civil marriages and partnerships. Our first civil marriage took place on 29 June 2002 and our first civil partnership took place on 7 October 2006. The car park is owned and managed by Chiltern District Council and can accommodate 59 vehicles including 3 spaces for the registered disabled.

Performance Indicator Town Hall & Little Theatre	Target 2007/08	Actual 2007/08	Target 2008/09	Actual 2008/09	Target 2009/10
Cost to the Council per elector	£2.05	£1.39	£1.98	£1.62	£1.60
Income from lettings as a proportion of operating costs	56.7%	66.7%	55.0%	64.0%	64.0%
Number of lettings for the Town Hall	1565	1555	1565	1412	1500
Number of free-of-charge sessions granted	15	6	10	15	10
Number of civil marriage/partnership ceremonies	20	18	20	14	15
Little Theatre – number of theatre lettings*	N/A	136	N/A	180	N/A
Little Theatre – number of class lettings*	N/A	343	N/A	419	N/A
Little Theatre – number of private bookings*	N/A	20	N/A	22	N/A

*The Little Theatre PIs were introduced in 2007/08. Targets are not set, but performance is assessed by continued comparison of data.

Annual summary of the Town Hall

The Town Hall remains a popular venue for a variety of uses, from classes and parties to business meetings. The relatively recent addition of facilities, such as wireless internet access and a laptop, in combination with the Town Hall's central location and good parking provision, have meant that the venue is used increasingly by professionals for meetings, training courses and business breakfasts.

Sports Pavilions and Playing Fields

The Council's service objective is:

to satisfy the requirement to provide high quality recreation facilities within the town.

The service we provide...

- **Codmore Playing Field** – This 7-acre sports ground accommodates two football pitches, an artificial cricket wicket and pavilion that provides modern changing facilities and a small social area which is available for hire for social functions.
- **Marston Playing Field** – This sports ground accommodates two football pitches.
- **The Moor Playing Fields** – The Moor is owned and managed by the Town Council. The playing fields on the lower Moor accommodate four football pitches.

Performance Indicator Sports Pavilions, Playing Fields	Target 2007/08	Actual 2007/08	Target 2008/09	Actual 2008/09	Target 2009/10
Cost to the Council per elector.	£0.76	£0.80	£1.24	£0.70	£1.23
Income from lettings as a proportion of operating costs.	13.3%	21.3%	10.7%	19.3%	13.6%
Number of lettings for football matches.	50	60	70	83	70
Number of organisations in total using these facilities.	8	8	8	9	8

Annual summary of the Sports Pavilions and Playing Fields

Thanks to a grant from Chiltern District Council and the Bucks Waste Strategy budget, the Town Council has carried out a major upgrade of the Codmore Field car park. Large dips in the surface had been exacerbated by large lorries accessing the recycling centre located in the car park, making the surface difficult to drive on for users accessing the field. Half the area now has a tarmac surface, so that the recycling lorries can gain access without causing damage. The remaining internal maintenance works for Codmore Pavilion were also undertaken this year.

A dedicated Marston Pavilion working party has been working hard to try and progress the development of the re-building of Marston Pavilion. However such a facility is dependent on attracting sizable amounts of external funding and this is proving difficult due to the planning restrictions on the size and potential usage of the building (see p.15).

Chesham Moor Gym & Swim

The Council's service objective is:

to satisfy the requirement to provide an open-air swimming pool and fitness facilities for the town.

The service we provide...

Owned and managed by the Town Council, this facility provides a heated outdoor swimming pool open May to September and adjoining gym, football pitches, a tennis court and a multi-court. The centre was closed in 1995 for extensive refurbishment and re-opened in 1997. It now provides changing-room facilities for the outside sports pitches as well as a pool hire facility.

Performance Indicator Chesham Moor Gym & Swim	Target 2007/08	Actual 2007/08	Target 2008/09	Actual 2008/09	Target 2009/10
Cost to the Council per elector	£2.58	£5.46	£4.19	£4.47	£5.15
Income as a proportion of operating costs	N/A	N/A	N/A	65.1%	61.8%^
Number of swims	N/A	16,463	17,500	17,140	16,000 ^x
Number of lettings for tennis court	1600	1024 [*]	†	683	1800
Number of lettings for multi-court (includes tennis, netball, football)	350	0 ^{***}	†	**10	800
Number of gym visits	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	14,000 [^]

* The tennis court data for April and May 2007 is unavailable.

** The multi-court was not available for lettings for the majority of 2008/09, pending resurfacing.

*** The multi-court has been closed since April 2007, pending resurfacing.

† Targets were not set as the multicourt was closed prior to re-surfacing, and it was known that the tennis court was also be temporarily closed during 2008/09 for resurfacing.

[^] New PIs created for 2009/10

^x The target for this PI is lower for 2009-10 to take into account the impact of the pool's exclusion from the free swimming scheme for 60+ and under 17s.

Annual summary of Chesham Moor Gym & Swim

2008/09 was the second full year of the Council directly managing the Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre. For the second successive year, the open air pool was blighted by another poor summer weather-wise but even so the number of swims exceeded the 2007 number. In order to continue to attract young people, the Centre Manager has invested in a brand new giant inflatable with an Olympic design to tie in with the Chesham 2012 project.

The Moor Fitness Gym upgraded its fitness equipment through a renegotiated lease agreement and re-opened in December 2008. The investment made an immediate impact with the January-March income figures for the gym rising by 27.5%.

After being out of use for over a year, the Council undertook major renovation of the multi-games area, and also the tennis court, by investing £50,000 into the project. The facility was officially opened by the Mayor in the first week of May and is now attracting both casual and regular bookings for tennis, football, netball and basketball.

Chesham Cemetery and Closed Churchyard

The Council's service objective is:

to provide and maintain a local cemetery and Garden of Remembrance for the town.

The service we provide...

- **Chesham Cemetery** - owned and managed by the Town Council for and on behalf of the residents of Chesham. The cemetery is situated at the northern end of the town with entrances in Bellingdon Road, Berkhamstead Road and Alma Road. The cemetery caters for all religious persuasions. A small chapel with a seating capacity of 50 is available and may be hired for a service prior to interment. An Avenue of Remembrance is also available for the interment of ashes.
- **St. Mary's Closed Churchyard** - maintenance passed to Chesham Town Council by the Parochial Church Council in 1974. The Town Council is responsible for the upkeep of the Churchyard including its grass, walls, fences, gates and trees.

Performance Indicator Chesham Cemetery & Churchyard	Target 2007/08	Actual 2007/08	Target 2008/09	Actual 2008/09	Target 2009/10
Cost to the Council per elector – cemetery & churchyard	£3.12	£2.85	£3.23	£4.08	£4.50

Annual summary of Chesham Cemetery and St. Mary's Closed Churchyard

As Chesham Cemetery celebrated its 150th anniversary in 2008, the major project for the year was the publication of the Cemetery Booklet (see page 11 for more information). The cemetery chapel was open to the public as part of the 2008 Heritage Weekend, and the Friends of Chesham Cemetery provided tours to show visitors some of the sites of historical interest.

The Friends continue to be very active, and with assistance from the Cemetery Operative, have installed bird boxes in the cemetery to encourage nesting birds. The Wild Flower Meadow Project continues to flourish.

The employment of a dedicated Cemetery Operative means that the council now has a more visible presence in the cemetery to deter anti-social behaviour and assist visitors, as well as conducting routine maintenance work.

A number of physical improvements were carried out within the cemetery grounds. A new gate and ramp were installed, improving access at the top of the cemetery for the disabled and those with reduced mobility. New security fencing was also installed in this area to make the cemetery more secure.

Democratic Services and Corporate Management

The Council's service objectives are:

to provide the necessary and cost effective support to the democratic process and delivery of the Council's services.

to preserve the town's identity and promote its heritage through the Town Mayor's attendance at Civic and local organisations' events.

The service we provide...

- **Advice and support activities** - administrative support is provided to Members as part of the Council's decision making process. This includes officer time spent on the preparation of agenda items and reports to Council, minutes, and attendance at meetings involving Members.
- **Consultation** - the Town Council is consulted in the planning process and submits comments to Chiltern District Council on all planning applications concerning development within the parish. Residents may attend meetings of the Council's Development Control Committee and may make statements either for or against a particular development. The Council is also consulted on the Local and County Structure Plans and other Plans such as the Local Transport and the Waste Management Plans.
- **Customer services** - the Town Hall is a vital information point for the public; a "one-stop-shop" where information is provided not only about the Town Council's services but also on matters involving the services outside the remit of the Council.
- **Representational issues** - the Town Council aims to be the representative voice of Chesham's residents and lobbies other agencies and organisations on various matters in relation to the services that they provide. Examples include highway issues e.g. traffic calming measures and road safety schemes; London Underground; Thames Valley Police Authority and the Environment Agency. The Council is represented on seven charitable bodies, (see p.2 for details), and on a further 25 organisations and four working panels.
- **Other support services** - the Town Council also supports and promotes the role of the Town Mayor within the local community through, among other things, the Annual Civic, Remembrance and Carol Services and Annual Town Meeting. Other services that the Council supports include: Town Centre Revitalisation, Chesham in Bloom, Christmas Lights, War Memorial and Town Clocks.

Finally, the provision of information required by members of the public in the exercise of statutory rights (other than about specific services); completing, submitting and publishing statements of accounts, annual reports and performance plans; treasury management; external audit and external inspections are all part of the Council's Corporate Management services.

Performance Indicator Democratic Services	Target 2007/08	Actual 2007/08	Target 2008/09	Actual 2008/09	Target 2009/10
Cost to the Council per elector	£9.41	£7.90	£11.13	£10.38	£11.52

Annual summary of Democratic Services and Corporate Management

The Council continues to represent Chesham residents and has recently sought the public's views on a number of issues, ranging from our play facilities to the open air pool. The Council is responsive to residents' concerns and a recent example of this was the Council's support for the successful campaign by Action for Bridleways in Chesham to prevent Trapps Lane, Bunns Lane and Bottom Lane becoming Byways Open to All Traffic (BOATs).

The Council was also actively involved in a number of highly successful community events/projects, including Heritage Weekend, Chesham in Bloom and a free family fun day at the open air pool. The Council continues to be heavily involved in the Chesham Community Vision, contributing to projects promoting and enhancing business, tourism, the environment, transport, youth and community and has been integral to supporting the establishment of the Chesham Action Partnership; the leading

group delivering the vision. A recent outcome of the Chesham Community Vision was the production of six leaflets featuring new circular walks around Chesham. The leaflets are available for free from the Town Hall and can also be downloaded from www.chesham.gov.uk. The leaflets have been highly popular, attracting attention nationally from walkers and encouraging visitors to the town. As part of its commitment to promoting Chesham's economy, in 2008 the Council took over the supervision of the existing market contract on behalf of Chiltern District Council, to provide greater input and supervision at a local level.

As part of on-going training, a number of Officers have enrolled upon NVQ courses, including team-leading, customer services and business administration.

Environmental Performance

The Council's objectives are:

to minimise the negative impacts of the Council's activities on the general environment.

to work towards enhancing and protecting the immediate environs of Chesham.

Annual summary of Environmental Performance

The Town Council and Impress the Chess partnership were delighted to be awarded the 2008 South-East Market Towns Environment and Culture Award for the regeneration of Meades Water Gardens, the major focus of which was the re-instatement of rare chalk stream habitat. In July 2008 the Mayor, Cllr Alison Pirouet, officially re-opened the gardens by the unveiling of a new interpretation board. A partnership between Impress the Chess and the Environment Agency saw the installation of a footbridge over the Canon's Mill bypass in Waterside, allowing a stretch of the river that had previously been forced underground through pipes to once again flow aboveground, whilst also enhancing accessibility.

An environmental section was created on the council's web site, www.chesham.gov.uk, with pages dedicated to the work of Impress the Chess and highlighting the threat of invasive species, including advisory leaflets on the weeds Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam. The web site was chosen by DEFRA as an example of good practice on sharing environmental information and will be featured in a publication of guidance for public authorities.

The awarding of the Green Flag to Lowndes Park demonstrated that the Council is managing the park in an environmentally-sensitive manner, an example of this being the implementation of a new mowing regime to provide micro-habitats for invertebrates.

The Council officially endorsed the CarryABag Plastic Bag Free Chesham campaign, adding it to the Council's Environmental Policy and provided funding to the campaign to enable biodegradable cornstarch bags to be purchased for supply to local shops to support local businesses in the adoption of low-impact practices.

CHESHAM TOWN COUNCIL
Calendar of Meetings of the Council and Committees
May 2009 to May 2010

All meetings commence at 7.30 pm except where indicated

May 2009

- 11 Development Control
- 11 COUNCIL (8 pm)
- 14 Annual Town Meeting (Thursday)
- 18 ANNUAL COUNCIL

June

- 01 Recreation and the Arts
- 08 Development Control
- 08 Performance Review (8 pm)
- 22 COUNCIL
- 29 Development Control
- 29 Policy & Resources (8 pm)

July

- 20 Development Control
- 20 COUNCIL (8 pm)

August

- 10 Development Control

September

- 07 Development Control
- 07 Recreation and the Arts (8 pm)
- 14 Policy and Resources
- 21 Development Control
- 21 COUNCIL (8 pm)

October

- 05 Recreation and the Arts
- 19 Development Control
- 19 Policy and Resources (8 pm)

November

- 02 Development Control
- 02 Performance Review (8 pm)
- 09 Executive
- 16 COUNCIL
- 23 Development Control
- 23 Recreation and the Arts (8 pm)

December

- 14 Development Control
- 14 Policy and Resources (8 pm)

January 2010

- 11 COUNCIL (PRECEPT)
- 18 Development Control
- 18 Recreation and the Arts (8 pm)
- 25 Performance Review

February

- 08 Development Control
- 08 Policy and Resources (8 pm)
- 22 COUNCIL

March

- 01 Development Control
- 01 Recreation and the Arts (8 pm)
- 22 Development Control
- 22 Policy and Resources (8 pm)

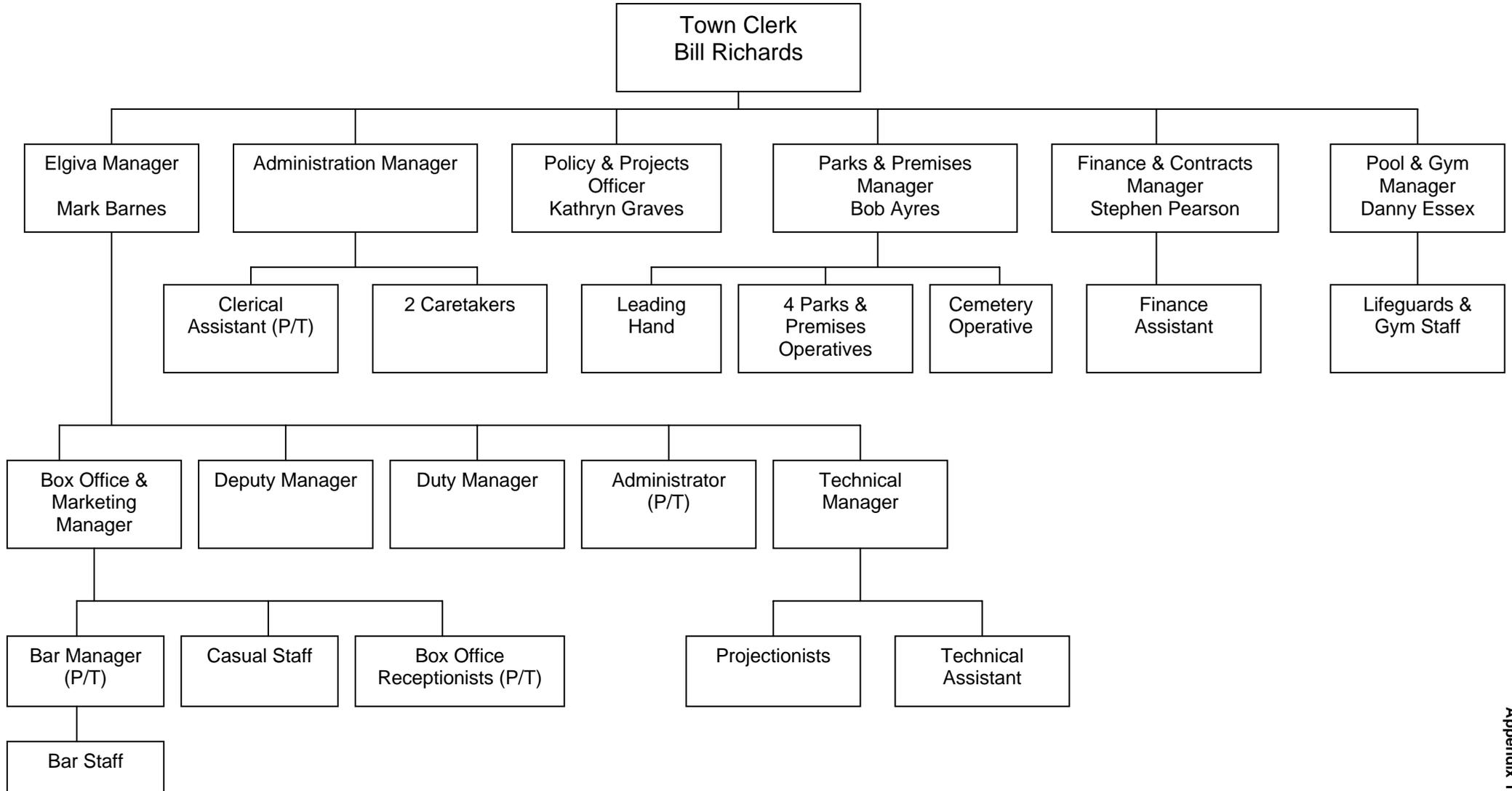
April

- 19 Development Control
- 19 Performance Review (8 pm)

May

- 10 Development Control
- 10 COUNCIL (8 pm)
- 13 Annual Town Meeting (Thursday)
- 17 ANNUAL COUNCIL

Chesham Town Council Structure



Chesham Community Vision your town – your future



VISION STATEMENT – Chesham in 2015

An active and vibrant working market town with an integrated but varied community where people support one another and can live, work, shop, visit and enjoy themselves in an environment that is constantly cared for and enhanced. A town that...

- provides sustainable employment opportunities, housing and business facilities that respect the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in which it is situated.
- encourages young and old from all areas to work together to achieve continual improvement to the facilities and future prospects of the town.
- promotes a thriving town centre which provides leisure and shopping facilities to meet the needs and wishes of residents and visitors.
- has a fully linked transport and communication system providing good services for people to travel within the town and regular connections to London and surrounding towns and villages..

BACKGROUND

The Chesham Community Vision was launched in early 2004. Over 400 residents from Chesham and surrounding communities plus representatives of more than 40 local businesses, groups and organisations responded to an initial consultation event. Over 3,000 individual responses have been captured as part of this new community-wide appraisal, completed by a broad spectrum of the community including the very young, young people, older persons, minority group representatives plus local retailers and businesses. A good example of the innovative consultation techniques deployed during the project was the 'Lights, Camera, Gab DVD initiative. What has emerged are a range of key trends and issues, challenges and aspirations, that those who live, work, play or visit the town and local area express when they consider the future of this community.

In late 2004 four Action Groups, Environment, Economy, Community & Transport, were created with a remit to build on the evidence from the consultation work and prepare a fresh action plan reflecting the views of the widest possible audience and forming a springboard for projects to be delivered by local community groups. This Vision document summarises the outcome of their work and offers an initial action plan which will guide project teams as they seek solutions to the challenges facing Chesham over the next 10 years.

HISTORY & HERITAGE

The people of Chesham have a tradition of being independent minded – politically, in religion and in trade. In the 1700s the commercial planting of beechwoods gave impetus to the first industrialisation of this rural town. Leathercraft followed. This together with a brewery gave the town its cachet of 4 B's – Boots, Brushes, Beer and Baptists. The arrival of the Metropolitan Railway in 1889 further boosted the economy. In the 1960s an influx of workers from Pakistan and Bangladesh began the change of the population into today's multicultural diversity.

As we move into the 21st century our traditional small industries have declined and the change is towards service industries. However, Chesham survives as a market town in a valued Chiltern landscape and still serves a wide rural area.

KEY VALUES

The key values, challenges and aspirations expressed by the community in and around the town are;

- ◆ A town of character
- ◆ A vibrant social mix
- ◆ A solid community infrastructure
- ◆ Regeneration of the High Street
- ◆ Ensure a sound local economy
- ◆ Best access to services
- ◆ Improved communication with all who live, work, visit and play in Chesham
- ◆ A strong sense of community
- ◆ An integrated community
- ◆ Easy accessibility to green open spaces
- ◆ Better choice of shops
- ◆ Linking of education, training and employment
- ◆ An integrated public transport system



Chesham retains a very strong community identity. The responses to our appraisal from all sectors of the community reflected this and also a clear appreciation of the blend of rural and urban. This unique mix e.g. distinctive town centre, green spaces, variety of small retail units, street market and surviving social fabric was recognised by all who we have consulted, i.e. living, working or visiting the town. Many valued and wished to retain the geographical distinctiveness of Chesham and surrounding communities within the Chilterns. These factors clearly play a major part in the importance of the town to a wide hinterland.

PARTNERS

This Vision reflects a strong local partnership, the process facilitated by Bucks Community Action and supported by Chesham Chamber of Trade and Commerce, Chesham Community Association, Chesham Society, Chesham Environment Group, Chiltern Racial Equality Council, The Children's Fund, Chesham Town Council, Chiltern District Council and Buckinghamshire County Council

ENVIRONMENT

Chesham has many attractive landscape features, notably, the River Chess, Lowndes Park and the surrounding woodlands, and an historic built environment that includes the church and old town. These need to be enhanced, protected and publicised. As well as larger schemes to achieve this, such as *Impress the Chess*, Chesham In Bloom and the Lowndes Park project, there are numerous local groups working on environmental projects. An Environment Forum will be set up to identify these groups, co-ordinate their work and to publicise their activities. Furthermore, access to the surrounding countryside needs improving for walkers and cyclists, both local and visiting, so that Chesham can be seen as a tourist centre and a gateway to the Chilterns. The town itself needs to have more to offer to visitors and the utilisation of the Yards off the High Street is one way of achieving this. Chesham has an interesting heritage of trades and professions. Publicity of this by means of the Museum and various publications will further add to the attractiveness of the town to the visitor.



ECONOMY

Chesham is a work/life town with the majority of residents working within five miles of home and it is this heritage that determines its character. It is not just a dormitory for anywhere else and its High Street is not a clone of a hundred other High Streets throughout the country. Maintaining these elements is essential to maintaining the character of Chesham.

The High Street in Chesham has suffered like those in many other market towns but with the fourth largest population in the County and with its hinterland of the historical Greater Chesham it has strengths to build upon. The need is to upgrade the High Street in terms of environmental and social attractiveness, to extend the range of shops, particularly local and specialist shops, to exploit the street market and to develop other facilities such as restaurants that will attract visitors. There is a need for consistent promotion of the High Street, recognising the convenience, variety, accessibility and expertise that local ownership and control provide.

Although Chesham has a substantial resident population, a really dynamic High Street needs to attract visitors from outside. There are many attractive features to Chesham, but no major attraction to bring people in. The need is to develop a strategy that will build on these lower key attractions to increase the numbers of visitors to the Town and to encourage those visitors to make use of the other facilities available.

It is characteristic of Chesham that people work and live in the town. To maintain this situation, which is highly beneficial in social and environmental terms, there is a need to retain commercial premises in the Town and also to ensure that the people in Chesham have the appropriate education and skills to meet the needs of 21st century employment.

The economic vision can be captured in these five themes:

- Chesham has always been a working town and the key to maintaining its character is to maintain its economy.
- An essential element in its economy is a vibrant High Street, with an emphasis on local and specialist shops offering service, expertise, convenience and on-the-spot accountability.
- A successful High Street requires a good variety of shops and services in an attractive environment, with consistent promotion of what the Town can offer to increase the flow of visitors.
- It is also important to continue to provide employment within Chesham, to benefit from the major social and environmental benefits that this brings.
- This will require the availability of a suitably skilled and educated workforce and access to suitable commercial premises.

COMMUNITY

The population of Chesham includes people of all ages and differing ethnic backgrounds. For geographical reasons, many communities are physically separated and the hinterland is even more distant. The community vision has identified four key themes that can address the challenges to this dimension of future Chesham.

- To meet the needs of all groups and communities and to seek integrated facilities that encourage an interaction of all ages and origins across the town and hinterland.
- To understand better the needs of communities in different parts of the town and hinterland, in similar terms. A commitment to community cohesion that can have as an outcome the celebration of similarities and differences across the community. Examples can include projects to celebrate Black and Asian History and support to similar festivals in the future.
- To define better the needs of young people, the elderly and other identifiable groups in terms of facilities, services and learning provision. A community hub in the former Pond Park ward has been identified as a major need.
- To develop an independent town community forum with an ability to draw down its own funding for community wide initiatives.

TRANSPORT

The transport vision seeks to improve access for all to local amenities, local communities and the nearby larger towns. Transport is restricted by the topography of the area, with traffic being funnelled along the A416 through Chesham. Congestion along this road is a major issue that needs to be addressed. Much appreciated is Chesham station and its direct access to London. It is important to improve access from the estates of the town and surrounding villages to Chesham town centre and the Railway Station. This can be achieved through improved transport facilities including frequent reliable core bus services, demand responsive buses, taxi-buses, cycling and walking.

Other issues include

- The difficulty in accessing health provision and other services within the Chesham area and beyond.
- The lack of a regular bus service to and from the nearby large towns
- The lack of evening and Sunday transport in general and the lack of information on transport
- The lack of a resident, shoppers and visitor parking strategy for the town and environs.

ACTION PLAN

This first action plan captures the challenges identified during the appraisal and proposed solutions. The steering Group will review and refresh this element of the Vision as projects progress.

Short Term Projects	Medium - Longer Term Projects
ENVIRONMENT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce a Rights of Way Development Plan • Audit surviving industrial heritage (mills etc.) • Create a local Environment Forum • Support and enhance the <i>Impress the Chess</i>, Lowndes Park and Chesham In Bloom initiatives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rights Of Way network improvements (for walkers, riders, cyclists, etc.) • Joint / linked projects • Seek to develop historic yards
ECONOMY	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a Training and Skills Forum (schools, colleges, employers) • Develop a Visitor Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revitalise the town centre • Establish an Enterprise Hub • Attract sustainable new businesses
COMMUNITY	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a community-wide Youth Forum • Waterside youth projects • Access and Mobility survey (COPAG - Chesham Older Persons Action Group) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated youth projects • Community Cohesion initiatives • Pond Park community Hub • Access projects
TRANSPORT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce a taxi bus service to feed railway station with through ticketing options. • Develop a road freight management strategy. • Parking and access strategy. • Promote school & workplace travel planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve access to local services, communities, amenities and towns • Introduce demand responsive local bus services to meet local needs and connections to national networks.

WHAT NEXT!

Project groups will now develop the solutions proposed in our initial action plan. Why not join them? For further details contact : Francis Gomme, Buckinghamshire Community Action, 01296 421036 email francis@bucks-comm-action.org.uk
Bill Richards, Chesham Town Council, 01494 774842 or our website: www.cheshamchamber.org/communityvision

یہ لیٹر آپ کی درخواست پر اردو میں بھی دستیاب کیا جاسکتا ہے
برائے مہم بانی اسکے لئے چیشم ٹاؤن کونسل سے رابطہ کیجیے

**FOR A LARGE PRINT
VERSION OF THIS VISION
DOCUMENT Contact
Chesham Town Council**

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