



St Asaph City Council Annual Report 2021-2022

Foreword by the Mayor of St Asaph 2021-2022, Cllr Peter Scott



It is an honour to be the Mayor of this very close-knit community of St Asaph. As a Council we have tried to listen to the needs of the residents and implement all that our precept allows us to do.

I believe we have a vibrant engaged city and, going forward, the Council will do its best to retain this happy place to live.

What do we do?

St Asaph is divided into East Ward and West Ward and there are seven City Councillors in each ward. The Council's role is to represent the electorate of St Asaph and to manage facilities for its residents:

Amongst other things, the Council is responsible for:

- Representing the views of the community
- Working with partners such as North Wales Police, Denbighshire County Council and Natural Resources Wales to deliver services for the community
- Maintenance and management of the Council's land at Roe Plas, The Common and Mill Race Meadow
- Street furniture—such as benches, bus shelters on the High Street and litter bins
- Play areas at Lower Street, Lllys Dyffryn, Bryn Gobaith, the Trim Trail and the MUGA at Roe Plas
- Christmas Lighting
- Events, such as the Winter fair and the Remembrance Sunday parade and service at the War Memorial

We serve approximately 3500 residents. The precept for 2021-2022 was £101,869

Meetings

The Council meets on the second Wednesday of every month, except August. Due to changes in Welsh legislation, the City Council now has to offer the opportunity for the public and members of the public to attend its meetings via remote attendance. The Council currently holds its meetings via Zoom. As part of a Welsh Government funded scheme, we are hopeful that broadband will be connected at the Council meeting room in the near future, enabling us to also offer the option of attending in person.

What did we do in 2021-2022?

Events

Platinum Jubilee

The Events Committee worked with Community Groups to provide a weekend of events to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee and the tenth anniversary of City Status in June 2022.

Remembrance Sunday

The Remembrance Sunday service and parade were very well-attended. This year we were able to return to the Cathedral to commemorate.



Christmas 2021

Due to Coronavirus, we did not hold our popular Winter Fair at the Cathedral in 2021, although the Christmas Window competition still went ahead. The Council were delighted at the quality of the entries and that so many businesses took part. The worthy winners were Claire Michelle.



Projects 2021-2022

City Plan

A new City Plan Working Group has been formed to produce a medium-term plan for the Council. We are working with partners at Denbighshire County Council and Cadwyn Clwyd to plan future projects.

Finance & Governance Pilot

The City Council took part in a Welsh Government pilot of the new self-evaluation toolkit, which aims to help Councils to improve their governance and financial controls. The toolkit is to be launched in June 2022. We were pleased to be part of the project to drive up standards in our sector.

Seating

We have installed three new benches in the wildflower garden opposite the Doctors' surgeries to provide a seating area.

In addition, two families kindly donated benches in memory of their loved ones, which have been installed at Roe Plas.

Litter Bins

Nine additional litter bins have been provided throughout the city:

- ⇒ Three along the riverside at Mill Race Meadow
- ⇒ Three at Roe Plas
- ⇒ One by the horseshoe bench on the west side of the river
- ⇒ One at the corner of Heol Esgob and The Roe
- ⇒ One at the Wildflower Garden

Flagpoles

Two new flagpoles were installed at Roe Plas and we have been proud to fly the flags for special occasions. This also enabled us to fly the Ukraine flag to show our support.

Community Engagement

The Council asked residents to contribute to two surveys, so that their views can be considered for the Council's plans. The first survey was for the City Plan and the second was to gauge public opinion on the Football's request for a lease over part of Mill Race Meadow. In addition we held our first Meet the Councillors session at the Community hub where a number of ideas were shared. The Council plans to hold further sessions in 2022-2023.

Letters Patent

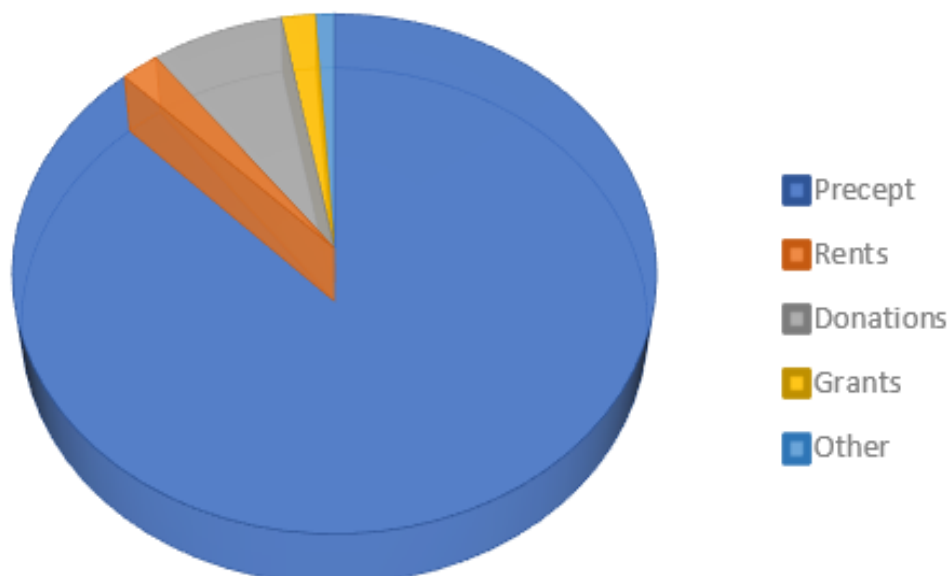
In 2012 St Asaph was granted city status as part of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations. To mark the occasion, the City Council gave a copy of the letters patent for display in the Cathedral. The Cathedral noted that the velum was deteriorating due to contact with the stone walls, and were forced to put the document in storage. The City council paid for a display board so that the letters patent could be displayed proudly once more. It seemed particularly appropriate to display the Letters Patent for the tenth anniversary year of our city status.



ST ASAPH CITY COUNCIL RECEIPTS 2021-2022

Where we get our funding:

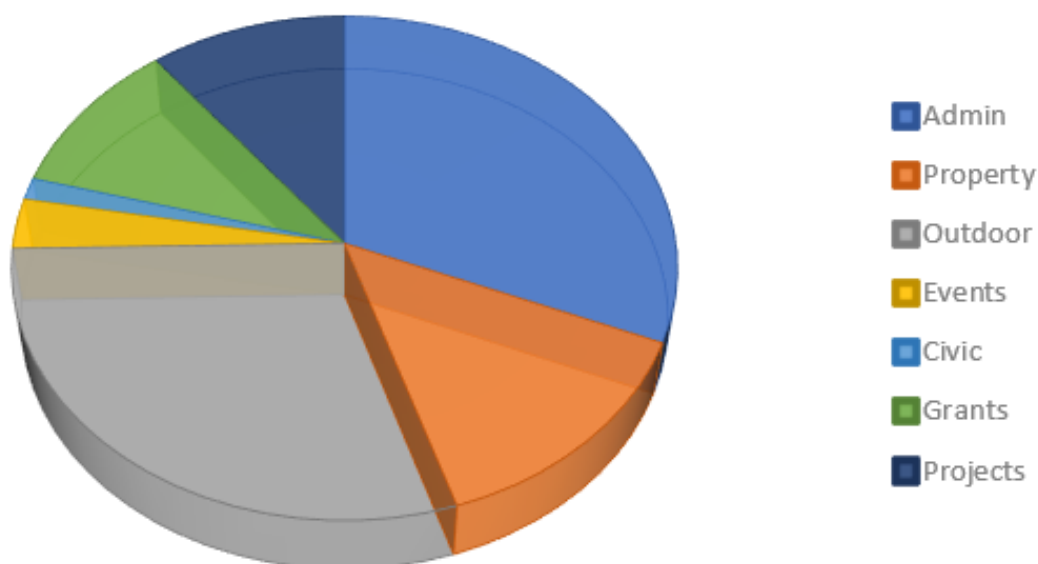
Precept	£101869	(88%)
Rents	£2450	(2%)
Donations	£8528	(7%)
Grants	£2182	(2%)
Other	£1222	(1%)



ST ASAPH CITY COUNCIL PAYMENTS 2021-2022

How we spend our money:

Administration	£44651	(31%)
Property	£19638	(14%)
Outdoor Costs	£42342	(30%)
Events	£4593	(3%)
Civic Costs	£1995	(1.5%)
Grants	£14586	(10%)



Grants Awarded 2021-2022

The City Council has a small budget for grants, which are available to community groups. The Council contributes £12,000 each year towards the upkeep of the Library to ensure that this popular and essential service is retained for the community. This is how we spent our budget in 2021-2022.

Organisation	£
Denbighshire County Council Library Services	12000
NWIMF	500
Mencap	100
Move a Marathon for Ethan	100
N E Wales Samaritans	50
St Asaph City Times	400
Royal British Legion	180
Natural Flood Management	500
British Red Cross	200
Welsh Air Ambulance	100
Tŷ Gobaith	100
Purchase of dementia friendly mats	356

Biodiversity

St Asaph City Council provides services to its local community which have an impact on biodiversity. We promote sustainability and biodiversity practices whenever possible. Most of our land has open access to Members of the Public and we attempt to manage all areas as sympathetically as possible to the biodiversity whilst allowing total freedom to members of the public. The City Council works with officers from Denbighshire and Natural Resources Wales to ensure that its land is managed sympathetically.

Mill Race Meadow

This land is left to grow naturally and is grazed by a large flock of sheep so that no pesticides or herbicides are ever used. One third of an acre has been set aside for use as a community orchard and some twenty fruit trees of different heritage varieties were planted. Jubilee Copse has been added in 2021-2022.

This area has a large amount of gorse growing along the riverside which is left to grow naturally and only occasionally is this cut back to prevent over-intensification.

A section of this land has been set aside as an allotment area for some twenty plots.

Roe Plas

Fifty per cent of this area is set aside as a football facility and this grassed area is cut as necessary by personnel from the Football Club.

The remaining area is a mixture of open grassland and woodland. The grassland is trimmed to a height of 65mm six times a year and the woodland is tended to ensure safety of Members of the Public. We have about six mature black poplars in this area.

The Afon Elwy Environment Group have worked with the City Council for many years to improve and enhance biodiversity. The AEEG was awarded the green flag in 2020 and 2021.

Approximately 100 whips have been planted on the small bund near the car park and along the hedge line adjoining Mill Race Meadow

The Common

The Common is almost entirely grassland with a small area of woodland. The grassland is again cut to a height of approximately 65mm six times a year to enable Members of the Public to enjoy the space.

All three areas are bounded by River Elwy.

What do we do?

- ⇒ Maintain footpaths and kissing gates on these three sites and provide litter bins
- ⇒ We leave the woodland wild and do hedge layering
- ⇒ Sections of the flood bank have been seeded with wildflower mixes, which include clover, yarrow and meddick. We have developed a bee and butterfly garden
- ⇒ We frequently plant new trees at various locations across these three areas
- ⇒ Most of the hedgerows are planted with trees which bear berries. These attract large numbers of Winter migratory birds
- ⇒ Each year our contractors strim any Himalayan Balsam along the riverbank and dispose of the arisings
- ⇒ Some areas of dead wood are left for wildlife
- ⇒ We encourage other organisations, such as the WI, local schools and Rotary Club to participate in our endeavours
- ⇒ In 2020, approximately 64 Sakura cherry trees, gifted by the Japanese Consul were planted on four sites across the city
- ⇒ We have noticeboards, strategically sited, to give information about flora and fauna in this area

Flora and Fauna

- ⇒ We have identified five different species of winter migratory birds which roost along Roe Plas and Elwy meadow
- ⇒ At least one otter holt has been identified on the riverbank
- ⇒ Native bluebells and other spring flowering bulbs have been planted in several different areas
- ⇒ We have several badger setts
- ⇒ Along the riverbank there are herons, dipper, kingfishers and goosanders
- ⇒ The river is populated by salmon, sea trout, brown trout, rainbow trout, lamprey, eels, minnows and bullheads

New Projects

Wildflowers

We have created wildflower areas on the west side of the Common, near the Trim Trail and opposite the Doctors' surgeries, which is called the wildflower garden. These areas are left uncut, with just one cut and collect undertaken at the end of August.

This is the second year for the wildflower garden. In Spring 2021 a Denbighshire Biodiversity Officer conducted a species count on our behalf and identified:

Ribwort Plantain, Daisy, Dandelion, White clover, yarrow, common mouse ear, creeping buttercup, ivy-leaf speedwell, germander speedwell, forget-me-not, lords and ladies, garlic mustard, nettle, spear thistle, dock, herb roberts, common mallow, meadow buttercup, primrose, shining crane's bill, hawkweed, foxglove, lesser celandine, bluebell and *apiaceae* spp.

Trees

In common with other responsible landowners, the Council has had an inspection of its mature trees in 2021-2022 and remedial work has been completed.

In 2020, we were delighted to receive a gift of 64 Sakura cherry trees from the Japanese Consul. These were planted on four sites across the city:

- ◆ By the Trim Trail
- ◆ In the Wildflower Garden
- ◆ At Roe Plas
- ◆ The avenue across the Common

Sadly, some of the trees have been vandalised and we have had new tree guards constructed on the Common avenue to protect the trees.



Jubilee Copse

Approximately a third of an acre adjoining the community orchard has been fenced off and planted with native trees to form Jubilee Copse. It was a fitting way to participate in the Queen's Green Canopy and to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee.

Planting included quercus rober, field maple, red maple, copper beech, wild cherry, holly, red hawthorn, rowan and pandora cherry trees

Thanks to a generous donation of twenty Denbigh Plum trees from one of our residents we are delighted to include these heritage fruit trees.



Our Plans for 2022-2023

- ◇ Land behind the Library—we continue to liaise with NRW for the restoration of this site which was used as a compound by NRW's contractors during the flood defence works. The plans include a story circle by the library.
- ◇ Brown tourism Sign—the City Council have contributed £10,000 towards the installation of brown tourism signs at junction 27 of the A55.
- ◇ Christmas Lighting—a new Christmas Lighting Working Party has been formed to work with suppliers to refresh and extend the lighting scheme for the City from December 2022.
- ◇ City Flag—The City Council are commissioning a new city flag, which we are proud to say has been designed by the Right Reverend Gregory Cameron. The project seems particularly appropriate in this anniversary year.
- ◇ Civic Robes—The Council is looking to have new civic robes designed for our Mayor, to enhance St Asaph's status as a city.
- ◇ Composting—we are having composting facilities installed for use by our contractors at Roe Plas. We hope that this will help us to manage our green waste efficiently.
- ◇ We plan to have the Wildflower Garden scarified so that yellow rattle seed can be sown to help reduce the volume of grass in this area. We hope that this will allow native wildflowers to thrive more readily.
- ◇ We have secured funding to have a wheelchair access path laid at the wildflower garden to improve the accessibility of this area for all residents
- ◇ We will have an inclusive swing seat installed at each of our three children's play areas to improve inclusivity
- ◇ A new path to the second gate at Bryn Gobaith play area is to be laid to make the play area more easily accessible.

Should you have any questions regarding the City Council's work, please contact the Clerk:

Mrs Jill Ellison- Email: clerk@stasaphcitycouncil.gov.uk Tel: 07521 641756