



What is the Wickham Market Partnership?

The Partnership consists of 6 trustees, all volunteers, with a range of skills. A third of the trustees retire by rotation at the AGM; most are re-elected. The Company Secretary (unpaid) is also a Trustee.

The Library & Community Rooms are a centrally located hub of activity for Wickham Market. Hire of the Community Rooms is essential to cover utilities costs for the building (a 45% share) and employment costs. Organisations hiring the rooms on a regular basis include Cruise Chiropractic (exclusive use of the Treatment Room), the Citizens Advice Bureau & Diabetic Retinal Screening Clinics. Casual hirings range from the District and County Councils (various), the MP for surgeries, counsellors and therapists as well as offering a meeting base for local groups.

The Partnership employs one part-time member of staff, an Administrative Assistant who works 7 hours per week. Duties include preparing and sending items on the 'Wickham News - Round Robin' email; meeting and greeting clients for above; taking minutes of meetings; making bookings and sending invoices for Community Rooms lettings; dealing with telephone calls and email messages - the public face of the Partnership.

The Partnership continues to have responsibility for the tennis courts. Access to the courts is the responsibility of the Tennis Club. Pay & Play sessions can be booked through the library (cash only). The Partnership continues to facilitate Wickham Market Shed.

What is our Vision for Wickham Market?

To be a community that values and supports all of its people
That serves the surrounding villages with pride
That works hard to sustain and improve its remarkable quality of life

What are our objectives?

To secure and improve the economic and social framework of Wickham Market and the surrounding parishes by encouraging the development of recreational and leisure activities; offering opportunities for education and training and improving and enhancing the town and surrounding communities.

TIMELINE FOR THE WICKHAM MARKET PARTNERSHIP

2001

Wickham Market Parish Councillors visit East of England Development Agency to ascertain reasons for not being in Rural Development Area = lack of funding

2001 - 2002

Market Towns Initiative (MTI) funding launched -

Wickham Market accepted for MTI funding **£119,497**

Projects undertaken under this funding: -

Market Towns Healthcheck (83% return rate of surveys)

Formation of Wickham Market Partnership as Company Limited by Guarantee with Charitable status (Oct 2002)

Employment of Project Officer

Enhancement of Wickham Market Hill (SCDC lead body) (£96k)

Resource Centre (in conjunction with SCC Libraries as lead body) + furniture/office

Skatepark (WMP lead organisation) (£35k)

Website (WMP lead organisation) (£1.4k)

Community Chest (grants of up to £1,000 for local groups)

Village Hall Play Area (Village Hall MC lead organisation) (£42.4k)

Employment of Development Officer

2003

Adventure Capital Fund grant to fund Development Officer

Community Transport project to link Campsea Ashe station with local villages

2004

Resource Centre completed and opened to the public in August

Community chest grants paid to local organisations (total of £9.4k)

Skatepark installation completed

Play area installation completed

2005

Feasibility study undertaken re sport & leisure facilities (Rural Renaissance Fund)

Resource Centre garden developed + garden furniture purchased

Development Officer managed One Voice Suffolk project from Resource Centre

2006

Business seminars conducted

Feasibility study completed (Sustainability Matters)

2007

Initial meeting for Community Woodland project = Wickham Woods formed

Successful bid to Peoples Millions Lottery fund for tennis courts (£94,000)

2008

3 Tennis Courts installed on Simons Cross playing field + Tennis Club formed

Primary School has regular sessions on the courts

2009

Full-size basketball court installed on Village Hall playing field (approx. £10k)

Basketball coaching sessions funded through Sport Unlimited

Promotional leaflet for Wickham Market (Economic Development Support grants - £4.6k; total £6k)

2010

Facilities signage for Wickham Market installed on A12 (EDSF grant via Wickham Market PC - £7.5k; total cost £12k)

Grant support given to Youth Football Club for Sports Pavilion (£10k)

Just 42 Youth Club, operating in Church Rooms, supported with grant (£1,000)

Liaised with Heritage Coast Market Towns Initiative to encourage Business Association

2011

Support for businesses to install Christmas tree/flagpole brackets & run markets (EDSF - £1.4k; total £2.6k)

Threats to library service led to public meeting & submission of Expression of Interest in running the library

Business plan worked on for pilot for library

Liaison with SCC over costs and running of library

Library Management Committee formed

Volunteers recruited to extend opening hours and to offer more services

2012

Library taken on as a pilot project, through the legal structure of the Partnership & with day-to-day running undertaken by a Library Management Committee

Extended opening hours offered to the public after the successful recruitment of 25 volunteers by the LMC

Greater school use of the library with dedicated sessions on Mondays

Parents and children encouraged to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge - 86 registrations (a record for Wickham Market)

Just 42 Youth Club, operating in Church Rooms, supported with grant (£1,000)

The Partnership celebrates 10 years of serving the community

2013

Partnership takes lead role in setting up a Town Team to support the economic infrastructure of the village - a range of organisations & individuals are represented on this.

First major action is the setting up of a monthly market on The Hill.

Survey of whole village undertaken to identify areas of need - Action Plan subsequently drawn up

Working groups set up for: Shops & Facilities; Events, Communications; Traffic & Parking; Business Forum

Each group works on appropriate elements of the Action Plan.

2014

Work continues supporting the Town Team:

Traffic & Parking group submit plans to Suffolk Coastal DC for a new parking strategy

Communications group update the village leaflet and pursue an information board and map for the square; distribution email list advertising local events; welcome pack produced for new residents

Support given to Village Hall Restoration Committee; community consultation takes place

Monthly market continued, culminating in Christmas market with 30 stalls

Discussions with East of England Co-operative to use the old store for a Wickham Market Emporium

2015

Library goes from strength to strength: Friends of the Library formed; computer help & advice offered by volunteers (shortlisted for an award from SCDC) due to WiFi being extended by Partnership

Traffic & Parking group successfully negotiated a new limited free parking structure in the village's car parks, including the Village Hall, in conjunction with SCDC

Discussions with East of England Co-operative continue regarding leasing the former Co-op store on the square; much progress made.

Inspirations (Wickham Market) Community Interest Company formed in readiness for developments in 2016 (trustees of Partnership and members of Town Team become its first directors)

2016

Partnership attracts new business to use its Treatment Room on a permanent basis: Cruise Chiropractic

Successful negotiations with the East of England Co-operative result in the opening of Inspirations,

a new venture where small retailers rent space within the shop but present it as one unit.

The vacant premises are once more occupied and present the square much more favourably.

New volunteers come forward to work on The George Public House project, and Lehmann House (former care home in danger of being sold for housing).

New partner found for latter; care and health hub progressed

New information board and map is installed on the square

2017

Partnership awards Community grants to two projects in the area:

Campsea Ashe Village Hall (floor refurbishment) & Community First Responders (defibrillator)

Town Team continues to support & grow the markets - mini markets now take place every Wednesday with monthly markets on the third Wednesday. Summer & Christmas Street markets are larger events.

Traffic & Parking group installs moveable flashing speed sign in the High Street Christmas Lights Switch-on event organised by Inspirations; supported by Co-op with grant

Wickham Market hosts the Men's Cycle Tour during its Suffolk day (Town Team); SCDC awards it the Best Dressed Village, whilst Inspirations is awarded the Best Window Display

The library is refurbished with new carpets, moveable bookshelves and display units, together with new signage, thanks to funding from planning permissions for new housing developments in Wickham Market

'Inspirations' grows in popularity. It supports community through gift vouchers for local organisations' events; themed shop window displays (Poppy Appeal); fashion shows (raised funds for Village Hall); managing parking permits; organising workshops (wreath making)

2018

Partnership awards Community Grants to three projects in the area:

Wickham Market Girl Guides (storage shed, camping equipment), Community First Responders (2nd defibrillator) & Wickham Market Village Hall (printing equipment related to New Build project)

Traffic & Parking group comes under the auspices of the Parish Council, conducting surveys and installing electronic speed signs to monitor speeds within the village.

Street markets managed by Parish Council whilst monthly markets are changed to smaller weekly markets. Parish Council takes over the management of all markets at the end of the year.

Wickham Market hosts the Women's Cycling Tour during its Suffolk section.

Town Team assists with purchase of replacement flags for flagpoles on the square.

New website launched for Wickham Market using grants from the Local Strategic Partnership, Enabling Communities (SCDC) & Parish Council together with significant funding from the Partnership.

Wickham Market 'Round Robin' email messaging service managed by Admin Assistant through Mailchimp to meet GDPR.

2019

Purchase of a range of litter picking equipment following the presentation of funds from a raffle by Suffolk Coastal Norse

Partnership awards four Community Grants to local projects:

Second grant to Community First Responders for another defibrillator; Avocet Academy Trust for polytunnel cover to provide outdoor learning space; All Saints Parochial Church Council for repairs to East wall of church. Wickham Market Care Project for Tova Tafel programmes (later returned on closure of project)

Support and funding given for People & Places Survey to be undertaken - summary results presented in December

Town Team designs, prints and circulates through local newspapers a Christmas Promotional leaflet, supported by sponsorship from businesses. This is for the fourth year running and continues in future years.

Partnership trustees consider a new project for 2020: 'A Men's Shed'. Initial meeting with UK Men's Sheds Association Ambassador held.

2020

Public meeting held to ascertain support for a Men's Shed held in January; presentation by UK Men's Shed Association

Fortnightly social meetings commenced with Shed participants: local Sheds visited, designs & aspirations shared. Partnership trustees pursue a location on the Glebe allotments through Covid 19 lockdown period.

2021

Men's Shed project pursued during Lockdown and meetings resume in Summer 2021; venue offered by Area Archive Centre, which wished to re-locate to the Library/Resource Centre garden.

Venue partially handed over in July with clearance of two sheds, to be followed by two portacabins when the Archive Centre has moved into its new home.

Support and formal agreement sought with Parish Council, which owns the land.

The Partnership & Suffolk Libraries investigate the siting of a new unit for the Archive Centre in the garden to the rear of the Resource Centre.

2022

Four swift boxes and a sound system are installed on the front of the Resource Centre building with the assistance of the Swift Society. It is hoped to attract swifts, a red list species.

Partnership Trustees bring together organisations celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee by producing a leaflet distributed to every household in the parish culminating in a 'Picnic on the Pightle' on Sunday 5th June.

The Shed project continues in its development stage, utilising two wooden sheds whilst waiting for the Archive Centre to move to its new premises. Tool assessment, gardening and rubbish clearance around the sheds makes the area much more attractive. Members assist with the installation of a garden tool shed at the Resource Centre; two benches for the church and Parish Council are refurbished and a shed for a local support group is reroofed and repaired.

The library slowly begins to recover after the pandemic. Volunteers on the rota are fewer in number, resulting in some closures when the library can't be staffed.

2023

Funding is secured to purchase a log cabin structure as a new home for the Wickham Market Area Archive Centre. The build is undertaken by volunteers, and the cabin is sited in the rear garden of the Resource Centre after the Partnership negotiated a new lease with the landlord, Suffolk County Council, and a licence with the Archive Centre. The records were moved in during June and July and the committee prepared for a relaunch in Spring 2024.

A long-term aim of the Partnership has been to find premises for a Men's Shed in the village, and with the vacating of the portacabins behind the Village Hall by the Archive Centre this has now been achieved. Two portacabins and a wooden shed, together with outside space, make this an attractive place to meet and work. The Shed is open to all but ostensibly serves the needs of men, offering a space to 'Connect, Converse & Create'.

Work is ongoing to create a safe and efficient workshop from which to do community woodworking projects.

2024

Grant awarded from the East of England Co-op's 'Community Cares Fund' to enable electrical upgrades to the Men's Shed and new flooring with further purchases to follow. Community projects completed include the refurbishment of several parish benches, repairs to a community garden shed on the Glebe allotments and refurbishment of a Rudolph planter donated to the primary school.

Inspirations closes its doors in April 2024 due to changes in retailers' commitments, affecting the scope of staffing. Residual funds are transferred to the Partnership to enable further projects to be supported locally.

Beneficiaries are The George Community Pub project and the Men's Shed.

2025

The tennis courts on Simons Cross Playing Fields are upgraded with new surfacing, lining, nets and fence repairs, together with assisting the primary school with equipment for children with the help of grants from the Sizewell C fund and East Suffolk Council's Outdoor Playspace fund.

The Men's Shed expands its offering with the purchase of battery-operated power tools and a dust extraction system using the Co-op grant. Weekly sessions supplemented with tea and cake continue.

A 'Nature First' grant is successfully managed for the benefit of the local environment and other grants are made to Pettistree PCC (Parish Room refurbishment) and the Playing Field Bowls Club (water tank).

The 'visitwickhammarket' website is transferred to the Parish Council for its management after it received a grant to develop its offering. The Wickham News email remains with the Partnership, ensuring more than 450 households continue to receive notices of events and information.

2026

At the Men's Shed a 'Womble Station' is made to support and encourage community litter picking in the village (situated at the Resource Centre). A small grant is made to the British Legion for centenary celebrations costs. Members of Wickham Market Shed make wooden poppies for the Wickham Market British Legion Branch's centenary, raising funds in the process.