

# Ross-on-Wye Town Council

## THE CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2010/11



**Town Clerk: Mrs D Mason, MILCM**  
**Deputy Town Clerk: Mrs R Lewis**

Councillors and Officers can be contacted at:-  
The Corn Exchange, High Street, Ross-on-Wye, HR9 5HL  
Telephone 01989 562373

Email: [admin@rosstc-herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:admin@rosstc-herefordshire.gov.uk)

Website:- [www.rosstc-herefordshire.gov.uk](http://www.rosstc-herefordshire.gov.uk)

## **INTRODUCTION**

2010/2011 has been another busy year for the Council. A new member of staff joined the Clerk and Deputy Clerk in August, a Cemetery Officer who is responsible for the marked improvement at the cemetery. We also have a voluntary Footpath Officer to whom we are most grateful.

## **COUNCIL COMMITTEES**

**The Policy and Management Committee** met five times during the year to review the administration, policies and management of the Council. New model Standing Orders were incorporated into the existing Standing Orders and staff contracts were revised and minor changes were made to other policies. Communication with council taxpayers continued through the Town Council's website and its quarterly newsletters which is monitored by the committee.

**The Amenities Committee** is the main "spending" committee and met 11 times. The council worked with the Can Do Crew to augment the street cleaning provided by the Herefordshire Council in the town centre as well as maintaining footpaths which are regularly inspected by a voluntary footpath officer. The committee is also responsible for maintaining the assets owned by the Council including Deanhill Park where substantial repairs were made to the wall along Alton Street; Tudorville Cemetery, where a new ashes area has been created; the allotments; the Bandstand and the Weather Station which has had the old fence replaced. It also looks after the Closed Churchyard at St. Mary's and provides some financial assistance to the Open Churchyard. For the second year running LED Christmas lights were used in the town providing an efficient and attractive display.

**The Planning & Development Committee** met 14 times during the year. It considered and made recommendations (it is not a decision making body) to the Herefordshire

Council planning committee on applications relevant to Ross. The Town Plan was adopted by both the Town Council and as supplementary planning guidance by Herefordshire Council and a "wish list" was given to Herefordshire Council for planning obligations monies. The planning committee has continued to support the introduction of a "house style" for shop front designs, based on the shop front design guide and issues affecting the heritage of the town. The committee has also considered license applications, tree works and parking orders and made its recommendations to Herefordshire.

**The Finance Committee** met seven times to monitor the spending by the Council. It considered 15 grant aid applications and produced the annual Budget recommendations for the approval of the Full Council. The precept remained as the previous year at just over £1 a week for a band D equivalent property.

## **GRANT AID**

The Council reviewed its policy of giving grant aid to support projects that benefit local residents and encourage visitors to the town. Financial assistance was given to the summer and Christmas carnivals, Country & Western Music Festival, the Ross-on-Wye Primary Schools' Choir Festival, Jamstand, Marches Family Network, Christ Church Lunch Club, Basement Youth Trust, Ross Live, Tudorville Community Centre and the Sea Cadets. The Council again sponsored a summer programme of bands playing in the bandstand on Sundays.

## **QUESTION TIME**

At full Town Council meetings the local police were invited to give a report and answer any questions. As a result of this dialogue, and in response to particular problems of public disorder, a Police Liaison Committee was set up to help find ways of tackling these problems. Also at full Town Council meetings there is an agenda item for public

participation as the Council is keen to give residents of Ross a chance to air its views. With several Town Councillors having also served as County Councillors, this gave an opportunity to discuss developments at both county and local level.

When matters of particular interest to residents (e.g. planning or grant applications) were to be discussed, those residents sometimes attended committee meetings.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

The Council has remained committed to improving communications with local residents. The Council website [www.rosstc-herefordshire.gov.uk](http://www.rosstc-herefordshire.gov.uk) has continued to be reviewed and updated to provide background information and highlight new developments. Agendas and minutes of all meetings are posted so that residents can see what is being discussed. Various application forms can be downloaded, e.g. for grants, memorials or booking the bandstand. A quarterly newsletter was delivered to each household to provide updated information on current events and details of the Council's activities and contacts. Close links were maintained with the local press and media to ensure that the public were well informed about the Council's activities and any new developments affecting the town both locally and nationally.

## **TOWN PLAN**

The Council adopted the Ross Town Plan which records the results of a consultation with the people of Ross on the future of the town. £25,000 was put aside in the Council's budget to help fund immediate measures recommended in the Town Plan report. £7,000 was spent on providing cinema equipment for the Phoenix Theatre and new approach signs were put up at a cost of just over £1,000. Other projects including the provision of a picnic site and associated leisure facilities at the riverside and the provision of more allotments were considered but no conclusions have yet been reached.

## **OUTSIDE LINKS**

The Council was invited to appoint a representative on the committees of local organisations which play a major role in the town and county. These include our three twinning associations, the Herefordshire Association of Local Councils and the Market Towns Forum as well as the Basement Youth Trust, the Ross Charity Trustees, Ross Fairtrade Group, the Sports Federation, the PCC and the Friends of St Mary's.

The Larruperz Community Centre, owned by the Council, continues to operate very successfully. Managed by an independent body of trustee/directors on a 99-year lease, it provides an increasingly wide range of community services for local clubs and organisations. Two representatives from the Council attend board meetings to help ensure that the community receives the full benefits of the Centre.

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor played a key role in giving support to local charities and events which promote the town and the Mayor raised funds and awareness of her nominated charity, the Hereford Branch of the Macular Disease Society.

## **CONCLUSION**

The council has reached the end of its four year term and as outgoing mayor, I would like to thank all our councillors who have served the town for their hard work, and especially those who took on the added role of chairman of the council and Mayor of Ross during this term, Derek Bedford, John Davies and John Edwards.

I wish our new councillors well and hope that Ross continues to prosper over the coming years.



Councillor Mrs Jo Lane,  
Chairman of the Council and  
Mayor of Ross-on-Wye, 2010/11

## How your money was spent

Below is a summary of the accounts for the year 01/04/2010 - 31/03/2011. A more detailed breakdown is available online at [www.rosstc-herefordshire.gov.uk](http://www.rosstc-herefordshire.gov.uk) or from the Town Council offices at the Corn Exchange.

<b>Income</b>	
Cemetery	7,255
Grants and Donations	4,331
Interest	561
Precept	200,000
Rental Income	11,395
Sundry Receipts	2,072
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£225,614</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	
Administration	68,782
Amenities	57,437
Community Centre	14,000
Donations	20,212
Mayor's Allowance & Regalia	2,550
Churchyard & Cemetery	7,324
The Corn Exchange	32,909
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>£203,212</b>

## Councillors' Attendance at Meetings: 10 May 2010 - 15 May 2011

Full Council Meetings				Committee Meetings			
	Possible	Actual	Approved absence		Possible	Actual	Approved absence
Cllr C Bartrum	11	11		Cllr C Bartrum	12	11	1
Cllr H Bramer	11	7	4	Cllr Bramer	7	2	4
Cllr P Cutter	11	9	2	Cllr P Cutter	4	2	1
Cllr G Lucas	11	10	1	Cllr G Lucas	18	16	2
Cllr Dr J Roberts	11	11	1	Cllr Dr J Roberts	21	18	3
Cllr D Bedford	11	11		Cllr D Bedford	21	21	
Cllr P Coleman	11	1	7	Cllr P Coleman	24	2	9
Cllr J Edwards	11	10	1	Cllr J Edwards	23	19	4
Cllr Mrs J Hyde	11	7	4	Cllr Mrs Hyde	13	10	3
Cllr Mrs J Lane	11	11		Cllr Mrs J Lane	5	5	
Cllr D Ravenscroft	11	10	1	Cllr D Ravenscroft	16	14	1
Cllr Mrs C Utting	10	9	1	Cllr Mrs C Utting	21	19	2

The Mayor, Cllr Mrs J Lane and Deputy Mayor, Cllr D Ravenscroft were also in attendance at some committee meetings as ex-officio members.