



ROSS-ON-WYE TOWN COUNCIL

PRESS RELEASE* PRESS RELEASE* PRESS RELEASE* PRESS RELEASE* PRESS RELEASE* PRESS RELEASE*

I am sure many of you will have been wondering what was going on behind the hoardings and mountain of scaffolding at the Market House over the last few months. Now that it has all been removed you may not think it is obvious, other than the steps, what has been happening?

This has been the first phase of the Council's plan to carry out renovation works to this much loved Scheduled Monument which is one of the jewels in Ross' crown.

The initial works carried out were identified as urgent following the commissioning of a condition survey by the Town Council. They have included stripping back parts of the roof to relay tiles and replace lead to ensure the building is water-tight. Work has also been done to replace decaying timberwork, removal of ridge tiles for renovation and replacement, whilst repairs and/or refurbishment to the rainwater goods such as downpipes and gutterings have been necessary. Most of this is unseen from ground height but has been vital to protect the fabric of the building from further deterioration due to environmental damage and weather conditions.

There was work to be done on the Clock Tower too which has included some much needed decoration, so love or loathe the newly painted landmark, it's definitely got everyone talking!

One of the major tasks during Phase I was the replacement of the very worn steps to the first floor, even this posed challenges when it became obvious that not replacing them all looked out of place and further consent from Historic England had to be sought for an additional step which had not been part of the original specification. There has been a lot of talk about the timing of the project and why couldn't it have been done over the winter months when there were fewer visitors to the town. In the ideal world this would have happened, unfortunately due to the lime mortar needed with the stone masonry there were concerns if the temperature dropped it wouldn't cure. This could have caused major problems which the Council could not risk.

The small Working Group which was set up by the Council has been very impressed with the work that has been carried out by the team working on the project including the Contractors and Architect. It has come in on time and on budget and in spite of upheaval to Made in Ross and the markets all those involved have remained positive and enthusiastic about the work. Thank you to all involved, we hope the residents of Ross will agree this grand old building is worth the time, energy and money needed to restore it to its former glory.

Phase II works will need to be discussed by the Council and it is anticipated that external grant funding will be sought as the next stage will involve higher value works which will involve replacement of the crumbling masonry. Watch out for more news as plans are unveiled.