

Your Town Councillors

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Emergency Co-ordinator

The Council has appointed Cllr Daniel Lister as Parish Resilience Officer. He can be contacted in an emergency (e.g. flooding) on **07557 658442**.



The Corn Exchange
is the home of

Ross-on-Wye Town Council

The Office is normally open
Monday to Friday, 9.30am - 1.00pm

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Local Elections Thursday 2nd May 2019

What matters to you in our local area? Is it the state of the local park, the need for more activities for young people, improving services for older people, making the roads safer or ensuring that local businesses can thrive?

There are roughly 20,000 local councillors in England, each representing their community and all with their own reason for doing so. You may already have an idea of the type of people who stand as local councillors, but this image could be outdated. Councils are particularly keen to encourage people from under-represented groups to get involved, such as younger people, people from England's many ethnic communities, disabled people and also women.

What do councillors do? Councillors are elected to the local council to represent their community, so they must either live or work in the area. Becoming a councillor is both a rewarding and privileged form of public service. They will be in a position to make a difference to the quality of other people's daily lives and prospects. Being an effective councillor requires both commitment and hard work.

Councillors have to balance the needs and interests of residents, stakeholders and other partners and the council. These will all make legitimate demands on a councillor's time, on top of the demands and needs of their personal and professional lives.

While it may be too late to think about whether you want to put yourself forward this time there are still other ways to get involved. If you're interested in finding out more, why not talk to your elected councillor.

And of course, don't forget to exercise your democratic right to vote and get out on polling day!



Traditional Vintage and Craft Market

In spite of windy weather, a dozen hardy traders attended the first new regular Saturday market for Ross-on-Wye. The market will continue every week with stalls offering that unique opportunity to buy those special gifts for friends and family and for treating yourself. Do come along!



Inside Issue 7:

Budget 2019/20

Arboretum

News round up

From the Mayor

Bands in the Park

Lions Club Centenary Project

Back page: contact details

Local Elections

Councillor Jennifer Hyde

The Town Council was deeply saddened by the death of Jenny Hyde, former Mayor and Town and County Councillor.

Jenny had been a councillor for many years and served as Mayor between 1993 and 1994. She was professional and dedicated, quietly working hard to get things done. Having served on the Town Council for many years until 2011, she was re-elected at a bi-election in 2015. She was also a county councillor for the Llangarron ward until 2015 and then was re-elected as a county councillor for Ross North in the 2015 elections. She worked tirelessly for children and young people in the county, both as Cabinet Member for Children's Services, and as Cabinet Support Member for Young People and Children's Wellbeing.



Ross-on-Wye
Neighbourhood Development Plan
2019 - 2031
Submission Version 2019

Ross-on-Wye Neighbourhood Plan

Following the most recent Ross Town Council Meeting the latest draft of the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) has been submitted formally to Herefordshire Council for its internal (Regulation 15) processing, and then public (Regulation 16) consultation.

In the Regulation 14 consultation, 54 people or organisations sent in a total of 284 comments. All these were collated and addressed individually. An anonymised version of the comments and how they were addressed will be available on the Town Council website from early April.

The Chase Hotel site housing allocation included in the NDP for consultation had been overtaken by revised proposals for a larger number of dwellings. However, it was clear that

there was considerable disquiet within the town about the revised proposals involving closure of the Chase Hotel. Because the final stage of the NDP approval process involves a Referendum (approve Plan – or not) it was judged that the risks of overall failure would be too great if the site is included. The plan submitted to Herefordshire Council therefore makes no mention of the Chase Hotel or the surrounding land.

The NDP cannot make specific statements about the continuation of a particular business, but can (and does) include policies that encourage and support areas of economic activity; for example, tourism.

The current, submitted, draft Plan is now available on the Ross Town Council Website.

Next steps will be internal processing by Herefordshire Council and then six weeks of Regulation 16 Consultation which is expected to start the day after the local council elections; i.e. on May 3rd. Following that consultation all comments will again be addressed, after which the NDP is submitted for Examination by an external planning inspector; following which any further requests for changes must be made. After which the final Plan enters the pre-referendum period of a further 6 weeks. Depending how many comments are made through those processes the Referendum is now expected in early autumn 2019.

Budget 2019/2020

Work towards budget setting started in earnest last summer with each of the Council's committees looking at their priorities and projects not only for the financial year commencing in April 2019 but also for the following two years.

There were many ideas coming forward which Members had to consider carefully to ensure their financial viability and any longer term day to day funding implications.

The Council accepted the increase in the budget reflecting the need to grow as a direct result of the additional responsibilities that have come from the assets that have been taken over such as the open spaces along the riverside, the markets, public toilets, Homs Road car park and the Market House amongst them.

The clear evidence of the Council's expanding portfolio is evident as seen in other news items contained within this Newsletter edition.

The Council made a renewed commitment in recognising its responsibilities to maintain the assets and amenities for the benefit of the Town to provide a clean and vibrant environment for residents, visitors and workers.

The annual expenditure budget was set at £547,945 with a precept request of £500,995, the difference being made up from various income streams derived from the Council's activities. This amount represents on a Band D Council tax bill a rise of about 25 pence per household per week which goes directly to the Town Council. A full breakdown of expenditure and income is shown on the Council website – http://www.rosstc-herefordshire.gov.uk/file-uploads/budget_19_20_0.pdf



Arboretum

The Amenities Committee is working with the Council's Tree Warden to identify an area of land at the Ropewalk and Long Acre sites that would be suitable to create a new arboretum.

The Council's Tree Planting Policy recognises that one way to remember the life of a friend or loved one is through the arrangement of a longstanding tribute, a reminder that they are not forgotten and the donation of a tree is often considered on these occasions.

Donating a tree may also be considered to commemorate an anniversary or an historical event, such as the Memorial Oak that was planted recently near the Band Stand in commemoration of the centenary of the end of WWI.

The plan was brought about as the existing area on Caroline Symonds Gardens that has been used for planting memorial trees is beginning to fill up and with the popularity of the scheme the need to identify a new area became necessary.

If you are interested in donating a tree the Council is still receiving applications and you can contact the office for further details.



The memorial arboretum at Caroline Symonds Gardens

Ropewalk Playground - The committee is looking at schemes for the Ropewalk Playground with a view to starting work later this year.

Canoe Launch - We are looking at ways to improve the facility for canoeists and alleviate problems for other users at the Caroline Symonds Gardens and Long Acre in Wye Street.

Fishing Platforms - Last year an experimental platform was made using live woven willow spiling to create steps which will both provide a place for fishermen to sit and help prevent erosion to the river bank. The council is grateful to the Ross Angling Club for financial help towards the creation of further fishing platforms along the river at Long Acre.

Wild Flower Meadow - Long Acre has been identified by the Herefordshire Meadows as a suitable site for a pilot scheme to develop the floodplain meadow for which they have received funding.

St Mary's Church Floodlights - The Town Council is responsible for the maintenance of the Closed churchyard, i.e. the lawned area surrounding the church. The current floodlights housed in this area are old, don't always work and when they do, use a lot of electricity. The committee began negotiations with the church to look at replacing them and is delighted that the "Friends of St Mary's" have agreed to take on this project and are setting up lighting trials of various LED Floodlights. The results will assist in determining the specification of a replacement lighting scheme.

Memorial Benches - We are able to install memorial benches at various locations including along the Rope Walk and Long Acre, in the Ross Town Cemetery, Crossfields and Deanhill Park. If you would like more information on how to go about this, contact the office or look at our website (details on the back page).

Look out for updates on these projects in our next edition.



From the Mayor

2018-2019 Mayoral Year Highlights

It has been an honour to serve the community of Ross-on-Wye as its Mayor, and both my Consort, Marie Ward, and I have been delighted to attend over 100 civic events so far and to represent the town in the other Market Towns and the City of Hereford.

This year - as it did contain the 100th anniversary of the signing of the Armistice effectively ending the first world war - was particularly poignant and I will not forget the crowds of Ross residents (more I believe than I have ever seen before) following the piper from St Mary's to the Prospect to witness the lighting of the beacon in commemoration of the ending of that conflict 100 years ago.

My own personal highlight was the performance of Cantabile from Hereford Cathedral School at the Chase Hotel in February. Over 100 guests attended and they were ably supported by the choirs from St Joseph's and Ashfield Park primary schools who really made the evening so special, raising over £1000 for my nominated Charity, Papyrus - seeking to prevent young suicide. My sincere thanks to Cantabile, who rightly have been voted 'Children's Choir of the World'!

As Mayor and Chairman of Ross Town Council I have presided over meetings covering many local issues during the year – issues to do with the Market House, the public toilets, markets and open spaces etc, culminating in the receipt for adoption of the Neighbourhood Development Plan which, if adopted, should see Ross through to the next decade in a way that the majority of residents wish.

Finally, I would say that it has been a pleasure for both Marie and for me to serve the people of Ross this year and I thank you all for that privilege.

With best wishes,



Cllr Harry Bramer, Mayor of Ross-on-Wye

Bands in the Park - 19th May to 25th August



The Town Council begins its 15th series of free summer Sunday Band Concerts at the Bandstand in Caroline Symonds Gardens on Sunday 19th May. Concerts begin at 2.30pm and finish at 4.30pm. As in recent years Kelsmor Dairy will be selling delicious ice cream.

This year's line up is confirmed and ready to go. The season starts with our home band - Ross Town Band, and finishes on 25th August with the talented Ebbw Valley Brass.

As well as the traditional brass and silver bands we are including JJ Swing Band on 26th May and Metz Big Band on 28th July.

On 23rd June we are hoping that there will be a "Big Picnic" at 12 noon to launch the Community Development Trust before A.W. Parker Drybrook Band play at 2.30pm. Put the date in your diary and look out for more details.

Ross-on-Wye Lions Club Centenary Legacy Project

2017 saw the 100th anniversary of the Lions Club International and the local Club in Ross-on-Wye wanted to play its part in celebrating this milestone. The members also



wanted to carry out a number of legacy projects to enhance the area near the Bandstand in Wye Street.

The Bandstand had come about as a result of much fund raising by the Lions in previous years and upon completion was handed over to the Council back in 2005.

Discussions started between the Council and Lions committee members to seek views on a number of ideas. The Council was more than happy to accept their proposals which included installing a power supply to the Bandstand which would enable the use of electrical equipment during the summer months when the concerts take place, hard landscaping of the wishing well area, the installation of a wooden sculpture of a lion's head and the installation of benches.

The projects are now almost complete and the newly created space has enhanced this corner of Caroline Symonds Gardens for all to enjoy.

The Council is very grateful to the Lions Club and happy to support their continuing success.

21st July - Proms in the Park

The big event of the season is the Proms in the Park on Sunday 21st July. This year it features Jay Cee Big Band, the Buskulules of Usk and Ebbw Valley Brass. The Buskulules is a new band for us in Ross. Their high energy performance is guaranteed to get your toes tapping! The Proms begin at 1pm and finish at 8pm. There will be food stalls throughout the event. If anyone wishes to trade with a food or drinks stall, applications must be made by 13th May.

Finally, if you work with a local charity and would like to have a bucket collection one Sunday afternoon, please get in touch.



Contact deputy @rosstc-herefordshire.gov.uk for more information or check out our Facebook Page @rosstowncouncil1