

Your Town Councillors

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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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Staff changes

The Council was sorry to say goodbye to its Administrative Assistant, Mrs Joanne Skelton, who has worked for the Town Council for over five years. Before the September Council meeting, the Mayor thanked Jo for her work and presented her with a garden ceramic owl from councillors and staff, past and present.



Helen

Joanne has been replaced by Anna Jelali and we are delighted to welcome her to the Council. In addition, a new Finance & Administration Assistant has been appointed since our last newsletter and again, we were very pleased when Helen Holmes, who many will recognise from her days working at Ross Library, joined the team.



Anna

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Councillor Surgeries

Herefordshire Councillor Surgeries take place each Saturday from 10.00am to 11.00am at the library in Cantlupe Road. Anyone is welcome to have a chat with a councillor with suggestions, encouragement or even complaints!

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**.



Following elections in May and the Annual meeting of the Town Council, Councillor Jane Roberts was unanimously elected as Mayor of Ross-on-Wye and Councillor Danny Lister was elected as deputy Mayor.

The Mayor writes:

Each year the Mayor chooses a good cause



to support and mine is Ross Community Development Trust. Ross CDT was established during 2018 with the support of the Town Council. Its first project is to combat loneliness by setting up a Good Neighbour scheme. Ross CDT aims also to support all other volunteer groups in Ross by providing publicity for their services and events, as well as with recruiting new volunteers.

The Ross Good Neighbour Great Get Together picnic launch event was on Sunday 23rd June at the Bandstand. Despite grey skies the rain held off and attendance was good. Several groups came along to run stalls, and there were games and prizes for the picnickers.



help visitors. Several of them bring their dogs along, which have their own livery and are very popular with the public.

Town Ambassadors

Ross-on-Wye Tourism Association has helped to set-up a team of volunteer ambassadors wearing purple waistcoats, who are on hand to

Since then we have put a survey leaflet through every letterbox in Ross about Ross Good Neighbours, with a good response rate. If you have mislaid your copy you can complete the survey by going to <http://bit.ly/RossGoodNeighbours>. We have already referred some volunteers to other groups so they can get started with befriending or other activities to help the community. This autumn we will be offering training and safeguarding checks for all who have stepped forward so we can get Ross Good Neighbours up and running in early 2020.

I am grateful for the donations already received for Ross CDT and have planned fundraising events over the coming months - I will do a 50km sponsored swim, and organise a raffle. The Mayor's Ball Ceilidh will be on 14th March at the Larruperz. More publicity to follow!

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Committee News

Many of the achievements of the Council come about as the result of the work of the committees. Our new committees have worked hard since starting in May to continue with the projects already begun by their predecessors to bring about some great results, as well as looking at new ideas. You can see who serves on each committee on the back page.

Policy & Management

Market House

I am sure you might have been wondering what was going on behind the hoardings and mountain of scaffolding at the Market House earlier this year. 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 level 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!

There are plans afoot to move towards the next phase which will include replacing worn stonemasonry. As this is expected to be a high value contract it is anticipated that external grant funding will be sought.

Watch out for more news as plans are unveiled.

Amenities

The Amenities Committee has been particularly busy and is perhaps the most "visible" in terms of what it does. The open spaces by the river are changing with work being carried out in a variety of ways, while in town we continue to provide colour with flowers and bunting.

Arboretum - This summer, over 60 trees have been planted on Long Acre and in Caroline Symonds Gardens. They are part of a "Linear Arboretum", an idea of the council's Tree Warden, Councillor Rob Taylor. The trees begin by the river near to Wilton Bridge and continue along to the canoe launch with further trees along Wye Street. All the trees have been sponsored and a list of trees and their sponsors can be found on our website. It is hoped to plant more trees on the Rope Walk and anyone wishing to sponsor one of these can contact the Town Council office.



Cllr Taylor helps Joanne Sketon plant her sponsored tree

Ropewalk Playground -

The Committee has approved a scheme for the Ropewalk Playground and by the time you read this, new equipment will be being manufactured for us. The Committee is grateful to Richard Mayo who kickstarted this project when he was Chairman of the Committee and who enlisted the help of residents to raise funds towards the cost. The Council is also grateful to the Lydia Cole Foundation.



Pyramidal Orchid

Wild Flower Meadow - Work has continued to encourage and reintroduce wild flowers along part of Long Acre. A cutting regime has continued to allow flowers to grow and this year we have found a new orchid which we hope has now gone to seed.

We were also pleased to have been chosen to join a pilot scheme to reintroduce floodplain meadow plants with funding from the Prince of Wales Trust, Natural England and Plantlife. The first seeds were planted by pupils from every year group in Ashfield Park School. We look forward to seeing the results next summer.

Fishing Platforms

- Further fishing platforms are to be constructed. These will help to prevent erosion of the river bank as well as providing somewhere for fisherman to fish. The council is grateful to the Ross Angling Club for their financial support for this.

Flower Tubs - This year has seen several new sponsors coming forward for flower planters. These have been located at the top of Wilton Road, outside the Market House and Millpond Street. It's a great way for local businesses to support improvements in making



the town look more attractive whilst giving them some free advertising. The Council is very grateful as the floral decorations in town are much improved as a result of these new partnerships.



Community, Markets & Tourism

Grants to the community - can we help you?

Ross-on-Wye Town Council is committed to encouraging community development and aims to work closely with organisations and groups by financially supporting projects that benefit local residents. The Committee administers the Council's grant scheme and tries to ensure that grants awarded aim to make a difference to the quality of life of people living in Ross-on-Wye. Funding has recently been given to the Shopmobility scheme, the Town Carnival, the Rugby Club, Park Run and the Penyard Singers. If you or your organisation feel that the Council could help you to achieve something of benefit to the community, you can download an application form from our website.

Bands in the Park

The summer series of concerts at the bandstand was a great success. Only on one Sunday out of 14 did the rain really come down and for the majority of Sundays the sun shone. The highlight of the season was the Proms in the Park, when the crowds were entertained by Jay Cee Swing Band, the Usk Buskuleles and Ebbw Valley Brass with music from 1.00pm through to 8.00pm. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all our bands, our audiences and organiser, Roy Smith of Berry Hill Band.



Tourism

The Committee has been working closely with the Ross Tourism Association and given financial support for printing the latest Ross Guide. Incidentally, we are celebrating the 250th anniversary of the first guide to the area next year, written by William Gilpin, with celebrations happening throughout 2020.



A Working Group will look at developing a tourism strategy for the town in partnership with the Tourism Association.



Stall holders under the new gazebo

Markets

Before the restoration work at the Market House took place, we tried a new venture by having a Traditional, Craft and Vintage Market on Saturdays. In spite of high winds on the first day, our brave stallholders did not let us down and then, continued to trade regularly until the scaffolding went up and space became limited. We are grateful to the Town Team for funds to buy new Market Gazebos and a trailer. These are proving very successful. We are looking into the best way to continue to provide a flourishing Saturday Market - watch this space!

And last but not least - we are organizing the Christmas Fayre and Christmas lights for the town - HAPPY CHRISTMAS!

Planning & Development

Although Herefordshire Council has the final say, the Town Council is consulted on all planning applications. The Planning Committee meets every three weeks to review the applications and, if appropriate, make comments. For larger applications, which mean the developer has to pay over money to support local services, the Committee may suggest suitable projects to be funded. For example, we have been working for some time to get speed-indicators fitted in town and have secured funding to cover the cost.



Ross-on-Wye Neighbourhood Plan

As you read this the Regulation 16 consultation (August 12th to 7th October) will have closed, or be drawing to a close. Hopefully all residents and business owners have taken advantage of this opportunity to comment on the Plan with last-minute ideas; by agreeing - there's a lot that it is difficult to argue with; or by disagreeing - we know you can't please everybody, even by saying nothing!

So what next?

Herefordshire Council will look at the consultation responses to determine if the Plan can go to the independent examination stage.



Once an examiner is appointed it is impossible to say for certain how long they will take to complete their report. It will depend on their workload, the complexity of the Plan, the comments submitted, or if they feel a hearing is required to address any queries. Once that report has been received Ross Town Council will need to make any changes the examiner requires, and Herefordshire Council will need to do further process work.

Only after all of this has been completed will Herefordshire Council set a referendum (approve or disapprove) date. We understand that date is likely to be "in the new year".

Melvin Reynolds, Chair - NDP Steering Committee.

Christmas Fayre

Sunday 24th November,
11.00am to 5.00pm
Light Switch-on at 4.30pm



Over 50 stalls, delicious food, music,
Santa's Grotto, street entertainment
See your Ross Voice for more information