



Ross-on-Wye Town Council Newsletter



The Mayor, Councillor Jane Roberts, is working with Ross Good Neighbours and local charity Ross Community Development Trust to respond to people's needs during the Covid epidemic. Jane says: *"It is a very difficult time for everyone, here and across the world. In Ross there is a tremendous community spirit and I am confident we can use this to make sure that everyone who lives here is looked after in the coming weeks."*

If you are in isolation due to Coronavirus, Ross Good Neighbours (RGN) can help with:

- ♦ **Shopping** - RGN can deliver groceries and other essentials to your door
- ♦ **Phone friends** - RGN volunteers can phone you each day to check you are OK and if there is anything you need
- ♦ **Pets** - RGN can offer help if you are unable to look after your pets as usual
- ♦ **Volunteering** - even in isolation you can join the RGN team and become a phone friend

Ross Good Neighbours is a team of local volunteers. We want to do what we can to support people affected by Coronavirus. However, there are limits to what we can offer.

We cannot help with:

- ♦ Personal care
- ♦ Advice on health or money issues
- ♦ Gardening
- ♦ Home maintenance work

However, if you have an urgent problem we may be able to suggest other sources of support for you.

Currently we are only offering shopping services to those who live in Ross Town. Contact your local parish council if you would like a shopping delivery but live elsewhere in HR9 and ask them to contact us.

The contact details if you want to request help, to volunteer, or to make a donation to the scheme's running costs are:

Telephone hotline: 01763 802 046

Email: help@rosscdt.org.uk

Web: www.rosscdt.org.uk

Further information can be found at: Herefordshire Council

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Updated

2nd April 2020

Many people enjoyed a great day in November, when HRH The Prince



of Wales visited the town. The Town Council commissioned a [short video](#). We hope it brings back happy

Important advice from our surgeries

Due to the coronavirus outbreak, we are receiving an exceptional number of calls. Please contact 111.nhs.uk if you believe you are unwell from coronavirus.

We are unable to provide advice about self-isolating, please follow the advice at doh.gov.uk.

Surgeries are now incredibly busy and no longer able to deal with administrative queries and sick notes. We would appreciate if all routine enquiries could be put on hold please, so we can focus on essential work. We are trying to ensure urgent work takes priority. For all repeat prescriptions please use the Patient Access online service. If this is not possible, prescription requests can be emailed to altonstreet.admin@nhs.net.

We are concerned that information is changing very rapidly and posts on facebook are quickly out of date. Advice on the following links is being regularly updated so please keep checking the following sites:

[NHS 111](#) is the best source of advice and we are directing patients who think they may have coronavirus to this website.

[General Covid advice](#)

[Stay at home guidelines](#)

[Social distancing](#)

Sick notes will very soon be available via NHS 111 rather than the surgery.

We appreciate your support and understanding in what is an unprecedented time for us.

Dr Simon Lennane, Alton Street Surgery

Please note that many events are now being cancelled and it is likely that some of the events described inside this issue may not go ahead. The local press, our website and social media will be keeping you informed.

Money, money, money

2020/21 Budget



In February the Council published its budget for the coming financial year and continues to put the provision of services and community enhancement at the heart of its plans. The Council voted unanimously to accept the budget recommendations, put forward by each of the committees, for the day to day running costs of the Council's assets and services, and capital funding for special projects e.g. the recently refurbished Rope Walk Playground. This year particular emphasis is being put on enhancing the environment, supporting artistic and cultural events, and encouraging tourism. The Council's ambition is to support our lively market town.

The Council has listened to residents and is committed to deliver services fairly and efficiently, whilst making wise use of natural and financial resources and reducing its CO2 footprint following the declaration of a climate emergency.

The Council made a renewed commitment to recognise its responsibilities to maintain its assets and amenities for the benefit of the Town, to provide a clean and vibrant environment for residents, visitors and workers. It accepted the need to make a small increase in its precept in line with the cap imposed by central government to all principal authorities of 2%. The budget reflects expenditure to maintain its assets such as the open spaces along the riverside, the markets, public toilets, Homs Road car park, The Corn Exchange and the Market House, which completed phase 1 of its renovations last Summer.

The Council has set aside £25K towards its aim of improving tourism and enable it to access significantly more external funding. It continues to support community and voluntary groups through grant funding (see below). In addition, it has supported the delivery of 1-2-1 advice services delivered through the CAB and has financed the town's CCTV. These are regarded as valuable ways the Council can support the health and well-being of the town's residents.

The annual expenditure budget was set at £563,478 with a precept request of £515,328. This represents on a Band D Council tax bill a rise of about £2.57 annually per household, making a total Band D of £131.24 which goes directly to the Town Council.

Community Grants

In the last 12 months the Town Council has given over £9,000 to local groups to help them with projects and events which will benefit the people of Ross. Money has gone towards many and varied projects including the summer and Christmas carnivals, a defibrillator for Park Runners, a children's book festival, providing tourist information leaflets and good neighbour leaflets, improvements at the Sports Centre, play equipment at Tudorville Community Centre, funding for the Museum without Walls, pancake races, Remembrance Sunday, security cameras and shopmobility scooter insurance.

Money is being set aside again this year and any local organisation can apply for funds. Full details are on our [website](#) or available from the office.

Open Spaces

Rope Walk Playground

Finally, after many years of waiting, our new playground was built on the Rope Walk in November. When a boat theme was chosen for the playground, we had little idea of the water which would encroach upon it at regular intervals. The Wye has flooded the entire playground more times since October than it had the old playground in the last 25 years. It is now lying unused due to Covid 19 and we look forward to restrictions being lifted when our younger residents will be able to enjoy the fantastic new equipment once more.

Sadly, we have experienced deliberate acts of destruction by vandals. Please be vigilant and if you see anyone vandalising the playground, please contact either the police on 101 or let us know at the Town Council Office.



Arboretum

Over 100 trees have now been planted along Long Acre, in Caroline Symonds Gardens and on the Rope Walk Meadow. A map showing the where the different trees are on Long Acre and Caroline Symonds Gardens can be found on the Bandstand Notice Board. A further map is being produced to show the trees on the Rope Walk. One or two trees have suffered a little as a result of the excessive flooding this winter but many are now in flower and their buds are about to burst. The Council would like to thank all those who have sponsored the trees - if you haven't yet received your certificate, they are on the way!



Memorial Benches

The Council is keen to place memorial benches along the river and in its open spaces. Details of how you can place a bench in memory of a loved one can be found on our [website](#). Pictured is a new bench by the canoe launch. The Council wishes to thank all the families and organisations who provide these benches.

Oyez, Oyez, Oyez A Town Crier for Ross

We are delighted to announce the appointment of Raymond Churchill as Town Crier. Raymond will be out and about, keeping you informed of what is going on. We are grateful to Peder Nielson, Town Crier of Bromyard and national champion town crier, for helping us with this appointment. We are also grateful to Iris Price who is helping to kit Raymond out with his "uniform" making him easily recognisable in the street.



Peder and Raymond

While many of the events Raymond would have been Crying for have been cancelled, Raymond will be Crying on Facebook and our website from time to time so look and listen out for him.



WYE VALLEY RIVER FESTIVAL

The Town Council was hoping to support the Wye Valley AONB River Festival during its visit to Ross on 5th/6th May. Sadly, along with

many other events this has fallen victim to the Covid 19.

STOP PRESS VE Day - 8th May 2020

The local branch of the Royal British Legion and the Town Council have taken the decision to postpone all the events of 8th - 10th May for VE Day, including the signing of the Armed Forces Covenant on the Sunday. Consideration is now being given to combining VE and VJ Days on the 15th and 16th August, subject to restrictions being lifted.

Meanwhile everyone is encouraged to raise a glass and toast the heroes of World War II at 3pm on the 8th of May and tune in to your local radio.

Bands in the Park

The sixteenth season of Bands in the Park was due to start on Sunday 24th May at 2.30pm at the Bandstand in Wye Street. The decision has been made to cancel the concerts scheduled for May and June. Decisions regarding the July and August concerts will be made when further information is available from the Government. Concerts last two hours and Kelsmor Diary will be in attendance with their delicious ice cream. There will be charity bucket collections and local charity organisers are invited to contact the Town Council if they wish to hold a collection. We hope that our Proms in the Park will take place on 19th July from 1.00pm to 8.00pm. We will keep you informed via Facebook and the website.



Speed Indicator Device

Ross-on-Wye Town Council now has a Speed Indicator Device that can be fitted in four locations throughout the town in order to monitor the volume and speed of traffic. SID bases are located on the A40 at Hildersley, the Ledbury Road, Archenfield Road and Walford Road. The SID is moved from site to site on a monthly basis and traffic data captured in order to produce reports on the volume and speed of traffic at different times of the day.

Tourism and the Town Council

Over the last few months, the Community, Markets and Tourism Committee has been looking at how the Town Council can best work with partners to encourage tourism. It has adopted a strategy based on four main priorities.



The first is marketing the town to deliver sustainable growth by targeting specific groups and working alongside other partners. Secondly, place shaping, to create a distinctive destination experience. The Council plays a major part in this in ensuring that its tourist infrastructure, from public toilets and gardens to the support of events is well maintained. In addition, the local community helps to create a distinctive feel in a place - we are fortunate here with very visible groups such as the Town Ambassadors and the Community Litter Clean Up Crew as well as the less visible volunteers who do so much to enhance our town.

Business engagement is vital to the success of tourism. The Council already has a good working relationship with the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and is looking at developing good relationships with other local Town Councils, WyeDean Tourism, the County Council and Visit England.

The Council works closely with our own Ross-on-Wye Tourism Association in all these areas but the final priority must be enhancing visitor services, information and the welcome. Consideration needs to be given to how Tourist Information Centres work and a review is planned.

The Tourism Strategy was adopted by the Council in February. You can read the full document on our website.

Ross-on-Wye Men's Shed

The Ross-on-Wye Men's Shed has been operational for two years and has a membership of 30 men. Our well equipped workshop has wood working and metal working machinery and we are able to take on a wide range of jobs and projects.

We have repaired approximately 60 benches in the town, including the latest two opposite The Chase Hotel and by Tudorville bus stop. We have refurbished tables for the Sports Centre, have helped with the Cricket Club's flood damaged motor mowers and built cupboards at the Larruperz Centre for Ross Town Band's musical instruments.

If you need anything made or repaired why not contact us and we will see what we can do for you.

Call 01989 562389 or email rossonwyemensshed@gmail.com.



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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**
Town Clerk, Mrs Sarah Robson FSLCC
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Administrative Assistant,
Mrs Anna Jelali

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**During the current pandemic the office
is closed to the public but the phone is
manned each morning.**

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The Annual Meeting of the Town Council

This was scheduled to take place on Monday 4th May at 7.00pm in the Corn Exchange. This is now unlikely to happen. At this meeting the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor for the forthcoming year are elected and membership of the committees is decided. In June or July there will be a formal ceremony at the Larruperz Centre to "make" the Mayor who will be presented with his or her chain of office.

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**.

Ross-on-Wye Neighbourhood Plan

By the time you read this we should have had a referendum to approve or reject the Neighbourhood Development Plan. As I write, I don't know whether you, the people of Ross, will have approved it or not.

The volunteers who have comprised the Steering Group have worked consistently for well over four years to produce a Plan that balances the views contributed in that time with the planning requirements that Herefordshire Council have to deliver for central government. Whether or not the referendum has approved adoption of the Plan, it's appropriate to express thanks to all the many people who have worked hard on the task.

If approved, we can look forward to seeing our precious natural and built environment being protected; new housing to meet needs in a sensitive manner; our local economy (including the cultural facilities) enhanced and diversified; and getting about sustainably made easier.



Most notably, new developments will be of modest size and situated to enhance the town rather than landowners and developers incomes.

Melvin Reynolds, Chair - NDP Steering Committee.

Referendum

Postponed

