

# Who's who

## Your Town Councillors

### East Ward

#### Phil Cutter

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#### Ed O'Driscoll

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#### Bev Pope

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#### David Ravenscroft

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#### Paul Symonds (also Herefordshire Councillor)

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#### Vacancy

This vacancy will be filled by an election on 6th May 2021.

### North Ward

#### Chris Bartrum (also Herefordshire Councillor)

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#### Dan Ciolte

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#### Ian Gumm

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#### Becky Howson

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#### Daniel Lister

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#### John Winder

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### West Ward

#### Simeon Cole

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#### Katie Fowler

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#### Jane Roberts

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#### Louis Stark (also Herefordshire Councillor)

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#### Rob Taylor

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#### Julian Utting

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### Ross-on-Wye Town Council

The Office is staffed from  
Monday to Friday, 9.30am - 1.00pm

Town Clerk, Sarah Robson FSLCC

Tourism & Marketing Manager,  
Jane Mainey

Finance Assistant, Helen Holmes

Administrative Assistant, Anna Jelali

Project Officer, Rachel Lewis (until June)

The Corn Exchange, 7 High Street,  
Ross-on-Wye, HR9 5HL

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

Tel: 01989 562373

### Staff changes

In March, we were pleased to welcome Jane Mainey to the staff as Tourism and Marketing Manager, a new full time position.



Originally from South Wales, Jane moved to Ross-on-Wye 17 years ago and has over 25 years' PR, marketing and events experience, working on a wide range of projects with the arts, corporates and local authorities. Before moving to Ross she lived in London, working for Ernst & Young where she organised a series of high profile events including the firm's sponsorship of Monet & Cezanne exhibitions at the Tate Gallery and then working 5 years as a PR manager with a telecoms company. On moving to Ross, Jane worked as a marketing consultant on a range of projects in Venice, Barcelona and Cannes. In her spare time, Jane volunteers with the Ross Community Development Trust and at the start of the pandemic worked with the shopping team.

At the end of June, Rachel Lewis will be retiring after 13½ years working for the Council, 10 years as Deputy Town Clerk and, since April 2018 when she reduced her hours in preparation for retirement, three years as Project Officer.



### Emergency Co-ordinator

CLlr Daniel Lister can be contacted in an emergency (e.g. flooding) on  
**07557 658442**

### Election - 6th May 2021

By the time most people read this, there will be new councillors for Ross East. At the time of going to press we understand Valerie Coker and Michelle Setchfield will be contesting the seat. We would like to thank them both for standing and look forward to working with one of them in the years to come.

### Coming out of Lockdown

#### Council Meetings

Council meetings have in recent months been held remotely via Zoom due to the pandemic. This is likely to end after 6th May as the government has announced it does not intend to extend the emergency legislation it brought in to enable this. Preparations are being made to resume face to face council meetings which will be temporarily located at the Larruperz Centre until the Council Chamber can be used, this is to ensure that social distancing restrictions can be followed. Details will be published in due course on the Notice Board outside the Corn Exchange offices and on the website at <https://www.rosstc-herefordshire.gov.uk/town-council-meetings/>.

#### Annual Meetings

**Annual Meeting of the Town Council** will be on Wednesday 5th May via zoom (joining details will be posted on the website).

**Annual Parish Meeting** for residents of the town will be on Monday 24th May at the Larruperz Centre (Main Hall).



## Spring 2021 Ross-on-Wye Town Council Newsletter



**Councillor Danny Lister's mayoral year has been overshadowed by a global pandemic but the encouragement he has given to others, his cheerfulness and his hard work to help those in need has made a huge impact on the town. He writes:**

As restrictions are being lifted it could be easy to forget

what has happened throughout the last 6 months however, I think it's important to remember how far we have come, the experiences we have encountered and what we have learnt from them. It has been a difficult and frustrating period, more so than the first lockdown, with the easing of restrictions and then the reintroduction of lockdown again. We have all had different experiences and it has affected us differently, I think that it is important to remember youth clubs were closed, support networks scaled back and socialising had all but stopped, putting strain on the way we process what has happened to us. It has meant, that as individuals and as groups, it has been incredibly hard to show how we have been feeling. We should never forget that being there for each other, and giving support, is the most important behaviour we can show and as a community this makes us stronger.

Regular events such as Remembrance, Summer and Christmas Carnivals, festivals, concerts and even the joy of singing Christmas carols were all affected as were the various planned Mayoral events.

As mayor, I really wanted to bring the community together, with a number of events for all, and hoping to give a little back too it has been extremely difficult to know what to do and how to do it. I have tried a number of ways online, very much trial and error, some have worked and some haven't but of course it is no the same as being together in the same place.

As I write, we are moving towards the lifting of restrictions so let's stay strong and safe and work to build a resilient community together. It has been so nice to see shops busy, events, such as the Spring Market at Caroline Symonds Gardens (see picture above) starting up again and groups picnicking and playing games by the river.

As my term as Mayor comes to an end I'd like to thank everyone for their support and encouragement, it really has

been inspiring and meant so much in a mayoral year where I have experienced many different and difficult moments. Without you all it would have been so much more challenging.

My fundraising for the year is for youth services, incorporating the two main youth clubs in the town and a number of other youth groups locally which offer support, direction and a service which inspires our youth, something I'm passionate about. Without the help of such groups I'm not so sure where I'd be today. All donations are greatly appreciated and can be made online here <https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/15658#!/DonationDetails> or by sending a cheque made out to "Ross-on-Wye Community Development Trust" (please write Mayor's Charity on the back) to The Mayor's Charity, The Corn Exchange, Ross-on-Wye, HR9 5HL.



Former Town Clerk, Mrs Denise Mason, presents the Duke with a locally made family of ceramic hedgehogs.

### HRH The Duke of Edinburgh

It was with great sadness that the Council learned of the passing of His Royal Highness. Less than ten years ago, councillors and staff were preparing to show the Duke what a fantastic place Ross-on-Wye is. On "Diamond Day" in 2012, the Mayor, Cllr David Ravenscroft, introduced Prince Philip to representatives from businesses and organisations. David tells us "as I escorted him through the exhibits he showed a genuine interest. It was a marvellous experience for all who were involved and I am sure many fond memories of that day are being recalled during this sad time of his death".

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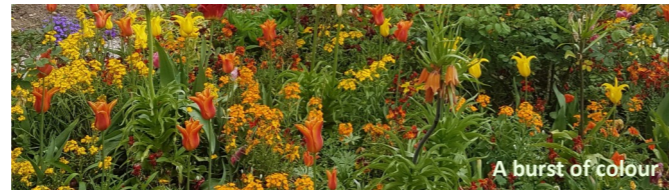


EMPLOYER  
RECOGNITION  
SCHEME

BRONZE AWARD

## Ross in Bloom

The Council is delighted that **Ross in Bloom** has reformed and is working hard to ensure that Ross looks blooming beautiful. The group is getting ready to take part in the RHS Britain in Bloom competition and launch the town into summer with a burst of colour. From beautiful borders and hanging baskets, to brightly coloured window boxes and courtyards, let's get back to nature and put Ross on the map.



An area of **Caroline Symonds Gardens**, which has been neglected for some years, has now been cleared and replanted by a group of Ross in Bloom members with the plants funded by Ross-on-Wye Town Council. Over 400 predominantly variegated evergreen shrubs were used to give year round interest to the public, birds and insects.

This spring we have our first snakeshead fritillary flowers, also in Caroline Symonds Gardens. These beautiful flowers are only found on flood plains - we hope they are the first of many.

If you would like to help Ross in Bloom contact Cllr Rob Taylor [rob.taylor@rosstowncouncillors.co.uk](mailto:rob.taylor@rosstowncouncillors.co.uk).



## Market House Phase II

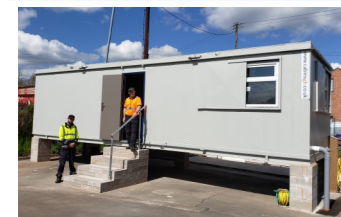
You may recall back in the summer of 2019 works were being carried out on the Market House. This was the first phase comprising emergency work that had to be done to make the building watertight and urgent repairs to stop further decay of this much loved Ancient Scheduled Monument.

A small Working Group comprising Councillors Lister, O'Driscoll and Utting have been working with the newly appointed firm of architects during the first stages of Phase II

to draw up the specification ready to move into the tender stage with the appointment of building contractors.

It is envisaged that applications for grant funding will be sought to enable further significant investment to secure the future of this iconic town centre building and create a resilient multi-purpose space for the community.

Watch out for more news as plans are unveiled and your views sought about how to develop the building into a space which will be fit for purpose in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.



## Homs Road Depot

Work has continued at the yard to provide an office, kitchen and restroom facilities for the council's amenities staff. In addition, the former toilet block has been carefully renovated to provide a workshop and store.



## Where your money goes - 2021/22 Budget

**Councillors were unanimous in their agreement there should be no increase this year in the parish precept which is included within Council Tax Bills.** There has been a growing awareness of the hardships many families in Ross have faced over the last twelve months due to Covid and that every effort should be made to cap the budget.

There has been an opportunity to make savings on some new contracts, grounds maintenance being one example of this, whilst every opportunity is taken to negotiate competitive deals when sourcing products and equipment. The budget has retained expenditure for running the Council's assets and core services such as the open spaces, play parks, public toilets, markets and cemetery.

A number of new projects have also been identified for this coming year, amongst them an upgrade to the sanitary ware at the toilet block in Red Meadow car park which is long overdue, and extending the current CCTV range to include hotspot areas which have seen an increase in the number of incidents of vandalism over the last year.

In addition to this there is continued support for advice services provided by the Citizens Advice and funding available for local community and voluntary groups in town through the Council's grant scheme.

The annual expenditure budget has been set at £548,911 with a precept request of £496,823. This represents on a Band D Council tax bill a levy of £131.24 which goes directly to the Town Council. Further information is available on the website at <https://www.rosstc-herefordshire.gov.uk/council-finances/>.

## Community Grants

**The Town Council is continuing to offer grants for projects which will benefit the town and its people.**

This year, the council agreed to increase the maximum to any one organisation to £1,000 during the financial year which could be several small amounts or a single payment. Applications must be approved before money is spent on any project. There are conditions to the funding, full details can be found on our website at <https://www.rosstc-herefordshire.gov.uk/what-we-do/>.

## Yarn Bombing

Over the last year you may have spotted some brightly coloured decorations adorning our trees and post boxes around Ross and wondered how they got there. Our secret yarn bombing team have been busy knitting and crocheting these beautiful pieces to bring a splash of colour and fun to our town centre during the pandemic. **National Yarn Bombing Day takes place on 11 June** so we look forward to seeing more of these creative pieces throughout the summer – coming to a post box near you!



## Bands in the Park - July to September 2021



Our popular series of Bands in the Park will be kicking off the summer season on Sunday 4 July at the Caroline Symonds Gardens, so grab your blankets and picnics and enjoy a relaxing afternoon listening to live music from local bands. This coincides with the Annual Big Picnic and we have an extra band at lunchtime, Monmouth School Band, who will be joining us from 12pm. Lydney Training Band will then entertain you from 2.30pm until 4.30pm.

The summer schedule continues through to the end of September, every Sunday afternoon. Kelsmor Dairy will be selling their delicious ice cream so there is no excuse not to come down to Caroline Symonds Gardens!

## Proms in the Park

Our Proms concert will also return this year on Sunday 5th September. We have provisionally booked Ebbw Valley Brass, a great favourite in Ross, for this event and details of the other two bands at the Proms will be released shortly. Look out for more details on our website.

## Charity Bucket Collections

As in the past there is an opportunity for local charities to have a bucket collection at the Sunday afternoon concerts. If you are interested please contact the office with your charity details and preferred dates. Email [admin@rosstc-herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:admin@rosstc-herefordshire.gov.uk)

## Christmas Fayre - Sunday 21st November 2021



Plans are already underway for this year's Christmas Fayre and lights switch on. Following the cancellation of last year's event, councillors are determined that this year the fayre will be better than ever before. Applications for stallholders can be made through the council office by emailing [admin@rosstc-herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:admin@rosstc-herefordshire.gov.uk).

As the weather warms up we hope you enjoy using our Covid-safe Market House seating area which is available for customers of our local cafes to eat and drink their take-outs. It will be open from Sunday to Wednesday and Friday each week, as our Ross Markets will be using the space on Thursdays and Saturdays.

Andrew Norledge, our friendly onsite manager, is available to seat you, register your details and ensure everything is as safe as possible.



## Armed Forces Day – June 2022

Following the lead from the Herefordshire Armed Forces Day organising committee, this year's Armed Forces Day events in Ross-on-Wye on Saturday and Sunday 26 and 27 June, are to be postponed until 2022. This is a real disappointment for everyone involved, however the decision was taken due to the ongoing pandemic. We are now looking forward to hosting the event in Ross in June 2022 as our town will remain the venue for Herefordshire as originally planned. Events that the committee will be rescheduling to next year include a flypast, a ceremony at the Market Place and on The Prospect, plus a series of parades from the various voluntary organisations through the town culminating in live music, food and drink stalls on The Ropewalk in the afternoon. The official Flag Raising this year on Monday 21 June at the Market Place, however, will still go ahead as planned.

## War Memorial

This year marks the 100th Anniversary of the dedication of the War Memorial on the Prospect. Work is needed to repair, clean, and repaint the lettering. The Council is arranging for this to be done ready for a rededication ceremony.

## Walking Festival - 24-26 September 2021

We are delighted that the Walking Festival has now been confirmed to go ahead in September this year so get your boots on and take this opportunity to explore our beautiful Herefordshire countryside. There is plenty of variety - from a guided tour of the lanes of Ross to a geological look at the Wye Valley Gorge and King Arthur's cave plus bird watching along the Wye and walks through Kerne Bridge, Goodrich and Symonds Yat. The organised walks range from easy to more intense – some are dog-friendly or include a cream tea enroute - so please take a look at the full programme online at <https://walkinginross.co.uk>. A series of fringe events will be planned in Ross around the Walking Festival so please keep an eye out for more details coming soon.

