



ROSS-ON-WYE TOWN COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

Review of the Year 2022

ISSUE 16

2022 ends on a high with biggest ever Christmas Fayre

This year's Christmas Fayre, which took place on 27th November and organised by Ross-on-Wye Town Council, was a huge success with over 70 stalls selling wonderful gift ideas and plenty of scrumptious food and drink.

Huge crowds joined in the festivities on the day with plenty to keep them entertained including live music by the Border Belles, Erica Jean, Chocolate Teapot, The Penyard Singers, Ross Town Band, as well as street entertainment by Jive by the Wye and the Grinch, whose mischievous pranks kept visitors on their toes.

The queue for Santa's Grotto was busy all day with lots of children eager to meet the main man! The reindeers, provided by Smart Trees, attended for a couple of hours and delighted the many adults and children who were keen to say hello and learn more about these wonderful animals.

The day was expertly compered by Ben Abbott, who helped to build the excitement for the lights switch on at 4.30pm which was conducted by TV presenter and local resident, Richard Hammond.

Before the countdown and the switching on of the lights, including the town's brand-new hedgehog themed lights, Richard spoke to the crowd to

share his fondness of the town. He said: "I am so very happy, as is my family, to be living here in Ross-on-Wye, we are very proud of this little town. I gather today has been an immense success. I have certainly enjoyed mooching around. I hope all the stalls have enjoyed a successful day." He continued: "Everything we do at Christmas, the sharing of food, the exchanging of gifts, it is about love and friendship, and that is something you can experience for free very much in Ross-on-Wye."

Ross-on-Wye Town Council would like to thank the following people who made the event possible: Ben Abbott, all the stall holders, the performers, the fantastic volunteers, Scaffolding 2000, Lucas Motorcycles, AP Stage Solutions, The Grinch (aka Johnny), Smart Trees, The Community First Responders, PCSO Claire Denton, Looby Lou Parties, Caple Security, The Town Crier, Made in Ross, Morrisons, Fibre Heroes, The Venue, EnviroAbility, FC Muggeridge & Son, Steve Oakey, and finally a huge thank you to Richard Hammond.



Ross-on-Wye Town Council were delighted to be able supply some of the traders in town with a Christmas tree again this year to help give the town a little extra festive sparkle.



A huge thank you to Ross Rotary and Dinmore Trees for supplying us with another beautiful Christmas tree!



You may have spotted our new hedgehog themed Christmas lights which have gone up around the town, all thanks to funding from Great Places to Visit. Picture courtesy of Just Jon Simpson

Historical Royal events in Ross-on-Wye

It was a mixed year of joy and sadness as the country celebrated the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June, however this was followed by the sad passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II death in September.

In June Ross-on-Wye residents celebrated the jubilee in style with a large number of fantastic street parties, with many receiving a grant from the Town Council to help aid celebrations and a visit from the Mayor, Cllr Ed O'Driscoll.

There were a number of wonderful events at St Mary's Church, and the lighting of the Beacon to mark the special occasion was attended by hundreds of people.

The whole weekend was topped off with a festival at the Bandstand with the Pasadena Roof Orchestra, where the weather failed to dampen the spirits of the attendees. The festival was jointly funded by The National Lottery Community Fund and Ross-on-Wye Town Council.



The Town Council also purchased a special memento for primary school and nursery school children. A special key ring with the Platinum Jubilee logo, made by local company, Crossfield Creations, was handed out to the children in schools within the Town Council Parish to mark this historic occasion. Sadly in September the news broke that Queen Elizabeth II, the UK's longest-serving monarch, had died at Balmoral aged 96, after reigning for 70 years. As the country went into national mourning the Town Council made sure Ross was marking this historic occasion, with books of condolences set up in various locations in the town, flags were flying at half-mast, as well as organising the Proclamation Ceremony for King Charles III which took place on Sunday 11th September.

You can view the full Proclamation Ceremony here: <https://fb.watch/hg8M5t0Og6/>



Ross-on-Wye hosts Armed Forces Day celebrations



Ross-on-Wye was the host town for the County's Armed Forces Day celebrations in June this year with a fantastic family event at the Ropewalk, which was organised by Ross Town Council and The Ross and District Branch of the Royal British Legion. Hundreds attended the free event which included displays, re-enactments, live music, dancing, a vintage car display, plus food and drink and a variety of stalls.



Equinox Festival welcomes award winning international musicians

Ross-on-Wye Town Council organised its second Equinox Festival at Ross-on-Wye's Bandstand on the riverside on 24th September, where international award-winning musicians joined the line up, including headliners Transglobal Underground as well as ambient world music DJ, dr trippy, the Omar Puentes Sextet from Cuba and percussionist Jon Sterckx.

The annual festival, part funded by the Arts Council of England, was launched last year post-pandemic lockdown, and took place during the Ross-on-Wye Walking Festival. The free one-day event celebrated world music alongside a wellbeing programme including circus skills workshops, arts & crafts, percussion, yoga and nature walks.



New additions to the Rope Walk play park Hedgehog friendly Ross

A new climbing frame, swing set and two new accessible benches were installed at the Rope Walk. The frame has been made possible thanks to a 'Green Spaces' grant administered by Herefordshire Community Foundation, and match funded by the Town Council. The new swing set, which includes a bucket swing, was fully funded by the Town Council.



Pictured L-R Carla Boyles, Ross-on-Wye Town Council Deputy Clerk and Alison Stephenson of Ross Garden Store

Ross-on-Wye Town Council are raising awareness of hedgehogs through labelling up their cutting machinery and further educating their operatives on the importance of looking out for hedgehogs when operating equipment. Our teams often carry out works in and around public parks and boundary hedges. This means that they tackle areas that would be the perfect habitat for hedgehogs and make every effort possible to not disturb them. The Town Council has gone one step further by making the Town Cemetery at Tudorville 'Hedgehog Friendly'. Ross Garden Store kindly donated a hedgehog house and food to the scheme.

Funding boost for Ross-on-Wye War Memorial

The Ross-on-Wye District war memorial, based in the Prospect, benefitted from a grant of £1,780 from the Grants for War Memorials scheme supported by Historic England.

The money helped to restore this beautiful and important memorial to its former glory. Work included stone cleaning of the memorial, careful removal of defective/loose mortar from the memorial's construction joints, repointing of the memorial's construction joints with an appropriate lime mortar, careful removing of defective paint from lead lettering and re-painting of lettering using an appropriate enamel paint in colour to match the existing lettering. Frances Moreton, Director, War Memorials Trust said: "War memorials are touchstones to our past. Preserving them maintains the link between those who have made the ultimate sacrifice and later generations who benefit from the freedoms for which they fought. War memorials also remind us of the full cost of war so we can hopefully learn the lessons which help us avoid conflict, and further loss, in future. War Memorials Trust is pleased to assist this project to improve the condition of the war memorial. If anyone knows of any other war memorials in need of help, please contact us or, if you believe in the importance of our work, support us as we are a charity so can only give further grants if we raise enough money."



Becoming Dementia Friends

Staff from Ross-on-Wye Town Council attended an introductory session at Ross Library to help develop their understanding of dementia. The sessions were run by Dementia Matters Here(fordshire) in partnership with Herefordshire Libraries and Ross-on-Wye Dementia Friendly Town Working Group.



As a public facing role the Town Council staff were keen to learn more about how they can help those living with dementia. Sarah Robson, Clerk, Carla Boyles, Deputy Clerk, Jane Mainey, Tourism and Marketing Manager and Charlotte Reynolds, Community Development Officer all attended a session.

Road improvements thanks to additional investment

A number of roads in each of the county's market towns were resurfaced thanks to additional investment of £1.75m. Each of the market towns had £350k allocated for road resurfacing work and other safety improvement schemes, which are set to take place over the coming months. The schemes included resurfacing, patching, safety barrier improvements, structural and drainage improvements, vegetation clearance, and white line repair. Works have been completed in Ross-on-Wye with Purland, Springfield Road, Eastfield Road/Fernbank



junction, Chapel Road/Tudor Street, Tudor Rise, Verschoyle Gardens, Roman Way all being resurfaced.

Acts of Remembrance

Services to remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice took place during November including services at the Chelsea Pensioners Memorial, Korean War Memorial and Falklands Conflict Memorial, an Armistice Day Commemoration at the Market House and the Remembrance Sunday Parade and Church Service at the Prospect and St Mary's Church.



The Great Places to Visit fund



The Great Places to Visit project is one of the key actions of the £0.5 million Recovery Plan aimed at enabling short-term economic, community wellbeing and organisational recovery. The aim of this project is to revitalise market town places by offering high quality experiences.

Ross-on-Wye's innovative Museum Without Walls – an augmented reality trail around the town showing historical reconstructions from the past – has finally been expanded and now features seven sites which users can view on smartphones or mobile devices.

The augmented reality exhibits in the Museum Without Walls include the new 'St Mary's Rood Screen', part of St Mary's Church as it might have

looked in 1724, 'High Street 1821', showing King George IV passing through town in his carriage, 'The Railway in Ross', the railway line at Five Ways at the bottom of Brampton Road, and 'The Roxy Cinema', currently occupied by Clarks' shoe shop on Broad Street.

Four new exhibits were funded by the Great Places to Visit Project to help enable recovery following the pandemic.

An extension to the Buggy Route is planned through Long Acre to connect to Wilton Road. The Ross on Wye Buggy Route is great for families with small children in buggies as well as people using scooters or wheelchairs. The walk is about 4 miles long, easy and stile-free. Perfect if you want to push along a pram or a wheelchair around Ross on Wye.

11 drop kerbs were installed at Greytree to help improve access into town for people with mobility problems in the area.



Ross-on-Wye Town Council has installed a digital tourist information point in the centre of the town near the Market Place which will provide details of businesses, services and activities available in and around the town. The project also included the installation of a wall mounted digital screen outside Ross Library on Cantilupe Road. The screens will be going live next year.

New town maps were installed in the Town Council notice boards located in the car parks at Wilton Road, Edde Cross Street, Red Meadow, King's Acre and in The Maltings earlier this year. The maps focus on the town's key points of interest and the notice board frames are 100% eco-friendly, using wood-effect recycled plastic on a stainless-steel construction.



We are really pleased with our new hedgehog lights which has been thanks to funding from Great Places to Visit. Picture courtesy of Just Jon Simpson

Supporting Ukraine

The Town Council were humbled to see the local support for the Ukrainian appeal, with one Ross-on-Wye business woman, Katie Fowler of Kts Craft Warehouse going above and beyond to help. The Town Council donated £10,000 to the Disasters Emergency Committee for Ukraine and supported people locally by allowing multiple applications to the Grant's Scheme for those who are supporting refugees coming to Ross.

The Welcome Back fund

The Welcome Back Fund was funding from Central Government to County Councils to help places get back on the feet following the covid pandemic.



With this funding work was completed to improve the Town and Country Trail in Ross-on-Wye. The work included sorting out the muddy sections and the broken fencing along the entire route.



HM Government European Union European Regional Development Fund

Helping to strengthen community links

Ross-on-Wye Town Council agreed at their October meeting to budget a £26,000 contribution for one year in the 2023/24 budget to support the reintroduction of a regular bus service between Ross, Ledbury and Newent. This follows a campaign by Buses4Us who are aiming to raise £250,000.

Councillor receives BEM for charity work

Ross-on-Wye Town Council were thrilled to see Cllr Jane Roberts recognised in the Queen's New Year's Honours List. Cllr Roberts received a BEM (British Empire Medal) for her outstanding work that the Ross-on-Wye Community Development Trust (Ross CDT) has done since its inception in October 2019. She was presented with her medal by the Lord-Lieutenant Mr Edward Harley OBE on 28th August at the Ross Community Garden. Jane is chair of the Ross CDT and was instrumental in setting it up in 2019. She has been a town councillor since 2007 and was mayor 2019/20.



Who's Who - your Town Councillors

EAST WARD

Phil Cutter

phil.cutter@rosstowncouncillors.co.uk
07976 630211

Ed O'Driscoll

ed.odriscoll@rosstowncouncillors.co.uk
07966 238510 / 01989 566644

Bev Pope

bev.pope@rosstowncouncillors.co.uk

David Ravenscroft

david.ravenscroft@rosstowncouncillors.co.uk
07786 408555 / 01989 562405

Michelle Setchfield

michelle.setchfield@rosstowncouncillors.co.uk
07419 135515

Paul Symonds (also Herefordshire Councillor)

paul.symonds@rosstowncouncillors.co.uk
07792 882148

NORTH WARD

Chris Bartrum (also Herefordshire Councillor)

chris.bartrum@rosstowncouncillors.co.uk
01989 563299 / 07958 199452

Dan Ciolte

dan.ciolte@rosstowncouncillors.co.uk

Linden Delves

linden.delves@rosstowncouncillors.co.uk

Ian Gumm

ian.gumm@rosstowncouncillors.co.uk
01989 565599

Daniel Lister

daniel.lister@rosstowncouncillors.co.uk
07841 194954

John Winder

john.winder@rosstowncouncillors.co.uk

WEST WARD

Simeon Cole

simeon.cole@rosstowncouncillors.co.uk
07931 161641

Katie Fowler

katie.fowler@rosstowncouncillors.co.uk
07794 248571

Jane Roberts

jane.roberts@rosstowncouncillors.co.uk
01989 563299

Louis Stark (also Herefordshire Councillor)

louis.stark@rosstowncouncillors.co.uk
01989 568622

Rob Taylor

rob.taylor@rosstowncouncillors.co.uk
01989 563670

Julian Utting

julian.utting@rosstowncouncillors.co.uk
01989 565685

Contact us

Ross-on-Wye Town Council offices are normally open Monday to Friday from 0930 to 1300.

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

@ admin@rosstc-herefordshire.gov.uk

☎ 01989 562373

🌐 www.rosstc-herefordshire.gov.uk

OFFICE TEAM

- Sarah Robson FSLCC | Town Clerk
- Carla Boyles | Deputy Clerk
- Jane Mainey | Tourism & Marketing Manager
- Charlotte Reynolds | Community Development Officer

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