

ROYSTON TOWN CRIER

News from your Town Council – March 2019



Focus on Royston Market



Our new Market Manager is Bob Mills who took up his position with Royston Town Council on 2 January 2019. He has lived in Royston for over 12 years and having decided to dispense with the commute into London seized the opportunity to take on this role.

Prior to commencing this appointment he worked for over 27 years with the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. During that time he worked as a housing manager, was responsible for services promoting independent living for the elderly and latterly was Tower Hamlets Corporate Contact Centre Manager. In that capacity he was dealing with a vast array of council services which included housing repairs, pest control, anti-social behaviour, refuse and recycling and parking.

He therefore brings to our town a wealth of experience and knowledge.

Bob commented as follows:

"From week one of living in Royston my family has made an effort to support both the market and the High Street and my wife actually set up a food stall on Saturdays shortly after we moved into the area.

There is no doubt that the market has contracted a little since then but it retains some really good food outlets and other interesting stalls and we have always made a point of shopping there at least once a week.

The market should be a social hub for the town and it would be nice to think that we could see a resurgence of interest among the local community.

The challenge faced is encouraging new traders to Royston but to do this they need to feel confident that there is adequate footfall to support their businesses. And of course, I understand that footfall will only increase if there is an incentive to attend and the commodities being sold make it worthwhile for customers to want to visit.

The food stalls on the market offer excellent fresh produce and I can vouch for this as a customer myself. The quality is outstanding and if there are any foodies out there I would highly recommend you give them a try.

However, the objective in the coming year is to try to introduce a greater diversity of products and I hope that residents will support this initiative by making an effort to spend a little time on the market and see exactly what is on offer.

Since taking up my appointment I have spoken to dozens of people who feel pretty much without exception, that a thriving market is important for the area. However, a significant percentage of those people also admit to never visiting it, let alone making a purchase, and hopefully that can change in the future.

High streets and markets throughout the country are struggling for a variety of reasons and as a resident I will be hugely disappointed if the fortunes of the town generally do not improve. Royston is a great place to live and it needs the market to be successful.

You will find me on the market from 8 am every Wednesday and Saturday and I would welcome any views customers may want to share regarding its future direction."



Annual Town Meeting

Thursday 21 March 2019, 7.30 pm - Royston Town Hall

Please come along to the Annual Town Meeting; you will hear reports from town, district and county councillors on the work they have been doing over the past year. There will also be the opportunity to ask any questions that you may have.

The Town Mayor's Community Trust Fund Awards will be made, and Community Awards presented to those local residents who have made a significant contribution to the life of our community.

We hope that you will help us celebrate everything that makes Royston such a good place to live and work.

We look forward to seeing you there.

All the fun of the May Fayre

Please put **Monday 6 May 2019** into your diaries for a fabulous day out for the whole family

Priory Gardens 12 pm to 4.30 pm

Our two free attractions this year are **'Last Man Standing'** and **'Circus Whiz'**, plus the Fayre offers many other activities including the very popular dog show, fairground rides, bouncy castles, Punch & Judy and charity stalls.

Naturally Royston will again be hosting a stall promoting their new initiatives of the local environment and social gardening. If you would like to be involved with this group please contact the Town Hall office.

The War Memorial gets a revamp

Royston's War Memorial has been cleaned up and refurbished, and a special exhibition was put on around it for the Centenary Remembrance Day.

The War Memorial in Melbourn Street had suffered erosion to the name plaques. Prior to the First World War Centenary Remembrance Sunday last year, work was undertaken to replace parts of the panels, re-letter existing panels and insert lintels above them to hinder further erosion. New ramps were also put in, and slabs re-pointed and re-laid.

This work was funded by generous donations from the **Brian Leslie Racher Trust** (£20,000), the **War Memorials Trust** (£1,500), **Johnson Matthey** (£1,000) and **NPK Holdings Ltd** (£500). The remainder of the funding came from Royston Town Council (approximately £8,000).

In the week leading up to Sunday, 11 November 2018, a special display was erected around the memorial. Two panels flanked the central stonework, holding a plaque each for every man on the memorial. The display was the brainchild of **Chris Murphy**, Chairman of Royston Royal British Legion, and was fabricated by **Jim Bird** and his team at Big Day Graphics. The entries were compiled by **Michael and Pamela Wright** of the 'What Royston Did Project'.

Although most work was complete for the 2018 Remembrance Service, some re-pointing and spotlighting work will be completed when the weather improves.



Photo: Michael Wright

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Royston Town Council 2019-20 budget and plans

The Town Council Tax for a "Band D" property has been around £42 per year since 2015. For 2019/20 it will rise from £42.53 to £47.29, an increase of just under £5 per year.

We have made this increase to be able, amongst other items, to get rid of zero-hours contracts, budget more money for managing the ageing trees in our Plantations and provide a £20,000 fund to start improvements and introduce new facilities which we believe will benefit the community.

Some projects are already underway. Some we can do ourselves, others will require different sources of funds and some will be in the hands of District and County Councillors who we work closely with.

We have a long list which includes bicycle racks on the Market Place, establishing and promoting safe walking/jogging trails, a new bandstand/amphitheatre for Priory Memorial Gardens, securing the future of the Picture Palace, a disabled parking bay in the High Street, the A505 pedestrian/cycle crossing and many more.

Your views are important to us and we will be consulting with you on what should take priority.

Royston Town Council has always been fiscally prudent. Compare Royston's "Band D" with the 2018-19 figures for the small parishes of Ashwell £74.20, Barkway £95.78 and larger towns of Codicote £64.02 and Knebworth £73.44. This budget is the first from your new Town Council elected in May last year. We will continue to manage and use your money with care.

Royston is a great place to live. We can make small improvements ourselves and work with the District and County Councils to secure the bigger projects to benefit all our residents.

John Davison – Chair of Finance Committee

ROYSTON TOWN COUNCILLORS

A list of all Councillors' names and contact numbers is given below, together with details of the wards they represent. All Town Councillors serve in a voluntary capacity and are elected for a 4 year term of office. Councillors are not paid and do not receive any allowance for attending meetings.

Town Mayor: Cllr Iain Leggett

Deputy Mayor: Cllr F John Smith

Palace Ward

Amy Bourke-Waite	07375 089729	cldr.amy.bourke-waite@roystontowncouncil.gov.uk
Ian Coll	01763 244595	cldr.ian.coll@roystontowncouncil.gov.uk
Mark Hughes	07860 108085	cldr.mark.hughes@roystontowncouncil.gov.uk
Rob Inwood	01763 224997	cldr.robert.inwood@roystontowncouncil.gov.uk
Iain Leggett	01763 230978	cldr.iain.leggett@roystontowncouncil.gov.uk

Meridian Ward

Mike Harrison	01763 220055	cldr.michael.harrison@roystontowncouncil.gov.uk
Marguerite Phillips	07903 715533	cldr.marguerite.phillips@roystontowncouncil.gov.uk
F John Smith	01763 243082	cldr.fj.smith@roystontowncouncil.gov.uk
Philip Smith	01763 244775	cldr.philip.smith@roystontowncouncil.gov.uk
Vera Swallow	01763 222538	cldr.vera.swallow@roystontowncouncil.gov.uk

Royston South Ward

Thomas Perry	07854 609201	cldr.thomas.perry@roystontowncouncil.gov.uk
Carol Stanier	01763 220744	cldr.carol.stanier@roystontowncouncil.gov.uk

Royston West Ward

Ruth Brown	01763 230290	cldr.ruth.brown@roystontowncouncil.gov.uk
John Davison	07802 907700	cldr.john.davison@roystontowncouncil.gov.uk
Emma Squire-Smith	01763 661701	cldr.emma.squire-smith@roystontowncouncil.gov.uk

Newsletter
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Town Clerk: Miss Caroline Mills
town.clerk@roystontowncouncil.gov.uk