

ROYSTON TOWN CRIER

News from your Town Council – September 2021



Annual Report for the Financial Year 2020-2021

Royston Town Council's Annual Report gives a review of the activities of the Town Council during the Civic year and the financial report for the year ended 31st March 2021. The full report can be viewed on the council's new website <http://www.roystontowncouncil.gov.uk>, which also offers access to information regarding the committees, meetings, minutes, Town Council news and other areas of interest. Information and links are also available for other Royston organisations and community associations.

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the Council adapted to the restrictions and all premises were made COVID secure. New legislation was introduced which meant that council meetings were held virtually via Zoom. Once the legislation ended, the first face-to-face meeting took place successfully on 10th May 2021.



Fortunately, Royston market has been able to continue to operate throughout the year and it is clear from the increase in footfall on both Wednesdays and Saturdays that significant numbers of local people have re-evaluated their shopping habits.

The Town Council provides public halls, which can be hired, namely the Town Hall and Market Hill Rooms. Our two

community halls are hired out to various local organisations, community groups and privately to members of the public for children's parties, fitness classes and social events such as quizzes. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the halls were closed for the majority of the Civic year 2020-2021.

The Town Hall is used as a state-of-the-art digital cinema on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays throughout the year by Royston Picture Palace. The cinema is wheelchair accessible, and a range of drinks and refreshments are available at every screening. Ticket and refreshment prices are kept low for the benefit of all. The cinema is run by a wonderful team of paid employees and volunteers to whom we are very grateful – without them, the show could literally not go on. Royston Picture Palace has been closed for the majority of the 14 months to May 2021 due to COVID-19 lockdown restrictions. Now reopened, social distancing measures remain in place and will continue to be so, in line with government guidance.

Royston Cave closed its doors in March 2020 to safeguard our staff and visitors against the outbreak of COVID-19. It remained closed throughout the year. In light of these events, we looked to new strategies for engagement. Foremost, Royston Cave's website was improved to make information more accessible. The highly anticipated 3D, 360-degree digital replica of Royston Cave was launched. It was free to access for everyone between 21st August and 4th October 2020. In its first week of launch, over 1000 visitors explored Royston Cave virtually.

EXPENDITURE	Budget	Out-turn	Budget
	2020-2021	2020-2021	2021-2022
Administration/Democracy	117,443	122,935	129,571
Royston Museum & Art Gallery	100,819	65,385	91,666
Town Council Properties	97,628	76,754	95,451
Green Walk & Stile Plantations	18,039	16,624	19,080
Other Expenses (Civic Functions, May Fayre, Christmas Lights, Town Crier, Donations)	35,385	6,190	15,543
Royston Cave	19,224	13,753	20,032
Green St Allotments	4,409	3,878	4,465
Melbourn St War Memorial	2,864	2,322	2,423
Public Conveniences	5,084	2,003	2,913
Market Place - Markets and Parking	67,200	62,612	70,734
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	468,095	372,456	451,878
INCOME			
Interest	1,500	424	300
Royston Museum & Art Gallery	1,000	542	750
Town Council Properties	58,965	19,459	38,580
Green St Allotments	5,399	5,876	5,600
Royston Cave	12,000	268	10,000
Market Place - Markets/Parking	60,000	47,745	54,000
Precept	329,231	329,231	342,648
TOTAL INCOME	468,095	403,545	451,878

Royston Picture Palace

Royston Picture Palace is running a full programme each weekend. Out of respect for the safety and comfort of customers and staff, many of Royston Picture Palace's COVID-19 safety procedures will remain in place after 19 July. The main change will be that social distancing gaps between booking groups will reduce from two seats to one. Customers are kindly asked to continue to wear masks whilst inside the auditorium and all other safety procedures will stay as they are for now, including temperature checks and one-way systems.

We are pleased that an advanced audio loop system, linked to the state-of-the-art digital cinema server, will be installed to enhance the cinema experience for the hard of hearing. This has been paid for by Section 106 money earmarked for improvements to the Town Hall.

Royston Allotments

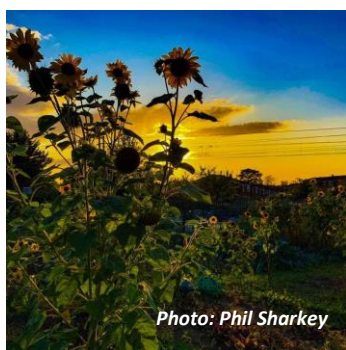


Photo: Phil Sharkey

Royston's allotment site, owned and managed by Royston Town Council, is located between Coombes Hole (the underpass), Green Street and the railway line. It is a thriving community with over 100 plot holders ranging from retired enthusiasts to those looking for a haven away from the

hubbub of everyday life to young families who want their children to understand where their food comes from (as well as digging large holes given half a chance!). As well as the traditional potatoes, onions, beans, tomatoes, soft fruits and flowers, there is an increasingly exotic variety of oriental herbs and vegetables being grown in the greenhouses and polytunnels, plus a few chickens. If you are interested in applying for a plot please contact the Council on 01763 245484, but be aware that there is a waiting list.

Royston Allotments and Gardens Association (RAGA) helps the council through maintaining and inspecting the site, as well as supporting plot holders and local garden members. Our shop provides quality supplies and materials at low prices for members, as well as good value seeds, potatoes and onion sets. We run an annual Open Day in August, for anyone interested in allotment gardening, to explore the site, speak to the plot holders and enjoy a hotdog. This year's competition was for the best use of reclaimed materials to attract beneficial wildlife to the site. There are also outings to inspiring gardens (pandemic permitting) and speaker events. Annual membership costs £5 and more information is available at www.raga.org.uk.

Chris Morgan, RAGA



Photo: Chris Morgan

ROYSTON TOWN CRIER

Diversity and Inclusion in Royston

Help us to make Royston an even better place to be! Royston Town Council seeks local representatives to join a new Town Council Diversity Forum. The Forum would love to hear your ideas to help ensure that the Council, in all its activities, is inclusive of and welcoming to the groups you represent. Please contact enquiries@roystontowncouncil.gov.uk to find out more.

A Vibrant Royston Market

The vibrancy enjoyed by Royston Market throughout the height of the pandemic continued into this year; with the considerable increase in the number of shoppers purchasing the market's outstanding food offer showing no signs of abating. So it came as no surprise that it should experience a further lift when non-essential traders were permitted to return from 12 April.

Opening up the market to people who were not just selling food has resulted in an encouraging spike of new applications to trade which now means that over a dozen new stalls have been participating on the market over the past few months.



This eclectic mix of new traders is rotated each week, which means that no market is the same as the week before. Hopefully this creates interest for our customers, while ensuring that all traders get an opportunity to work on a market, which now has all available pitches reserved until the end of the year!

Despite the relaxation of measures from 19 July, the market continues to do its utmost to ensure that it offers a safe shopping environment, with the specific aim of providing

everyone with as good a shopping experience as possible. Traders and the market's management would like to thank everyone for their continued support.

Robert Mills, Market Manager

Newsletter supported by:



ROYSTON TOWN COUNCIL

Town Hall, Melbourn Street, Royston,
Hertfordshire SG8 7DA

Tel: 01763 245484 Fax: 01763 248016
enquiries@roystontowncouncil.gov.uk

Town Hall office opening hours
Monday to Friday: 9 am to 4 pm

<http://www.roystontowncouncil.gov.uk>

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

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 Robert Inwood Deputy Mayor: Cllr Mark Hughes

Palace Ward

Brian Bylett	07765 253227	cllr.brian.bylett@roystontowncouncil.gov.uk
Ian Coll	01763 244595	cllr.ian.coll@roystontowncouncil.gov.uk
Mark Hughes	07860 108085	cllr.mark.hughes@roystontowncouncil.gov.uk
Robert Inwood	07846 309896	cllr.robert.inwood@roystontowncouncil.gov.uk
Iain Leggett	01763 230978	cllr.iain.leggett@roystontowncouncil.gov.uk

Meridian Ward

Elizabeth Beardwell	01763 242242	cllr.elizabeth.beardwell@roystontowncouncil.gov.uk
Mike Harrison	01763 220055	cllr.michael.harrison@roystontowncouncil.gov.uk
Marguerite Phillips	07903 715533	cllr.marguerite.phillips@roystontowncouncil.gov.uk
F John Smith	01763 243082	cllr.fj.smith@roystontowncouncil.gov.uk
Philip Smith	01763 244775	cllr.philip.smith@roystontowncouncil.gov.uk

Royston South Ward

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

Royston West Ward

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