

ROYSTON TOWN CRIER

News from your Town Council – September 2020



Annual Report for the Financial Year 2019-2020

Royston Town Council published its Annual Report in July 2020 and this can be viewed online at www.roystontowncouncil.gov.uk.

The Town Council is responsible for the Town Hall, Market Hill Rooms, Royston War Memorial, Royston Cave, Green Walk and Stile Plantations, Green Street allotments, Royston Museum, Royston Market and the Market Place and Angel Pavement car parks.

Since March 2020, due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, many of the council's services have been temporarily suspended in light of Government advice.

However, Royston Market stayed open for business whilst maintaining strict social distancing guidelines and initially only permitting businesses selling food to trade. This proved a lifeline to many local residents who found the experience of shopping outside in the open air, with clear safety procedures in place, a rewarding one. (Please also see market article on next page.)

Royston Allotments also remained open giving plot holders and their families the opportunity to undertake daily exercise in the fresh air. Safety procedures were implemented and advice was sent to all tenants advising them of the procedures that needed to be followed to keep themselves and other plot holders safe. Copious amounts of hand sanitiser have also been provided!

The Town Council requested a precept of £317,338 for the financial year 2019-2020. This meant that the Royston Town Council portion of the council tax rose to £48.49 per annum for a band D property, an increase of 2.5%. This has included money to refurbish some of the Town Council's properties and to plan to redevelop the Museum. It also includes money towards the setting up and running of a Youth Council.

Royston and District Community Transport

Royston Town Council would like to thank RDCT and their volunteer drivers for their amazing service to the people of Royston. Without them many people would have struggled to shop and get their medication.

Sustainable Travel Town

Royston Town Council has submitted a bid to the county council to apply to become a Sustainable Travel Town.

A sub committee of the General Purposes and Highways committee was set up, composed of the Chairman, his deputy, and two other councillors. Our two county councillors, Fiona Hill and Steve Jarvis, and the chairman of the NHDC Area Committee Tony Hunter, were also involved.

We have put together a bid, which was agreed by the main committee and submitted to the county council. Other towns in Hertfordshire have also put in bids, but only two or three will be awarded the status; we eagerly await news.

If we are awarded Sustainable Travel Town status, we could expect better footpaths, cycle ways and bus routes. In our bid we did mention we wanted to join our existing cycle ways to those of Cambridgeshire, especially the one to be built around Melbourn, with a bridge joining them over the A505 to the north of our town just to the East of the A10 roundabout.

It is essential that all three levels of council; town, district and county, work together on this project, as we always do. We are fortunate to have such very good district and county councillors who work with us and assist us in many ways on various issues. We will continue to keep the town advised of the progress on this matter.

EXPENDITURE	Budget £ 2019-2020	Out-turn £ 2019-2020	Budget £ 2020-2021
Administration/Democracy	110,957	96,707	117,443
Royston Museum & Art Gallery	88,254	83,841	100,819
Town Council Properties	86,080	90,303	97,628
Green Walk & Stile Plantation	17,776	17,304	18,039
Other Expenses (Civic Functions, May Fayre, Twinning, Christmas Lights, Town Crier, Donations)	39,796	13,115	35,385
Royston Cave	19,290	16,029	19,224
Green St Allotments	4,146	3,847	4,409
Melbourn St War Memorial	2,953	2,416	2,864
Town Manager	10,000	13,200	0
Public Conveniences	5,263	3,095	5,084
Extraordinary staff costs	0	45,345	0
Market Place - Markets and Parking	63,673	59,788	67,200
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	448,188	444,990	468,095
INCOME			
Interest	1,500	2,482	1,500
Royston Museum & Art Gallery	1,000	749	1,000
Town Council Properties	54,250	67,857	58,965
Green St Allotments	5,100	5,631	5,399
Royston Cave	12,000	11,871	12,000
Market Place - Markets/Parking	57,000	68,707	60,000
Precept	317,338	317,338	329,231
TOTAL INCOME	448,188	474,635	468,095

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YOUR GUIDE TO ROYSTON AND BEYOND

How has Covid-19 affected Royston Market?

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The Government's decision to impose lockdown from the 23rd March meant that only traders selling essential goods - namely food - were permitted to operate on Royston Market. The fact the market remained open at all, albeit on a reduced scale, was of course a real bonus for the town but understandably considerable concern and uncertainty existed among traders as they could have no idea how the unprecedented circumstances created by Covid-19 would impact their businesses.

It therefore came as a real surprise, even to the most seasoned traders who have worked on the market for many years, that in the weeks that followed lockdown a significant increase in footfall was experienced. This brought about new methods of working, with traders having to quickly adapt.

Extensive delivery services to those vulnerable members of the community who were self-isolating were now offered, while additional staff were taken on by some traders to accommodate the increasing volume of customers.

The social distancing measures in place on the market and shoppers' willingness to be sensible and adhere to the safety measures that have been recommended have also contributed to a pleasant shopping environment for customers. Positive comments have been received in relation to the quality of produce that is available and it has been encouraging to see so many new faces making a commitment to return week after week.

With non-essential traders returning from the beginning of June as lockdown eased and with additional traders making applications to work on the market, the increase in numbers of people attending on Wednesdays and Saturdays has shown no signs of abating. The feeling among traders and people who regularly use the market is that this can only be good news for both the market and the

town generally.

It has been so pleasing to see this demonstration of community goodwill throughout this difficult period and it is to be hoped that Roystonians continue to support local businesses generally as we all try to get back on our feet.

Robert Mills (Market Manager)



"Think Local, Shop Local"

Our Town Mayor, Cllr Rob Inwood, has been doing a sterling job to promote local traders in and around Royston by visiting shops and businesses all over town. He has been doing this even though busy with his job, working with children with special needs. Let's hope that as we get back to a 'near normal' life we can keep his inspiration going and shop local!

Planning Committee

The town council has continued to consider and comment on all planning applications that have been submitted for NHDC planning approval. And in particular, the proposed development by Gladman Developments. The committee **most strongly objected** to this application, saying that it was totally inappropriate to build a housing development in this location. For our full response see: <https://pa2.north-herts.gov.uk/online-applications/>. Ref.20/00744/OP.

We are also currently considering the application for the land surrounding Burloes Cottages Ref 20/0113/RM. This development has been granted outline permission and now the infrastructure, layout and visual impact are under consideration.



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

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
Vacancy		

Meridian Ward

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
Vera Swallow	01763 222538	cllr.vera.swallow@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

ROYSTON TOWN COUNCIL

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Town Clerk: Miss Caroline Mills
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