



Mayor's Winter Message

Dear resident

I am writing this one third of the way through my mayoral year – and what an eventful four months! As expected, I've met an astonishing range of individuals and organisations during that time. I knew that Romsey was a place filled with, and driven by, enthusiastic and committed people. But between our choirs, scouts, accountancy firms, relaunched hotels, foodbanks, cancer charities, dementia charities, dog festivals, Romsey Show, Plaza theatre, bed races, carnivals, Beggars Fair, council meetings, almshouses, religious services, care homes, orchestras, fire service, and rotarians (I am certain to have missed some...) – there has been quite a lot going on!

Looking back exerts a strong pull at this exact moment, most of all, at 70 years of the reign of our late Queen. An historic reign which drew to an end just as our post lockdown world was coming fully awake – the fantastic Platinum Jubilee celebrations making that abundantly clear. If there was a better Jubilee street party than Romsey's, then I never saw it. As a tribute to an outstanding monarch – and an outstanding person – it was perfect.

Looking forward to the new Carolean age – it is clearly going to have a tough beginning for many. I know it is early days, but I really do feel that our new King will help the country in the difficulties that we will face. There will also be good times of course – not least Christmas, which Romsey does so very well. I am so looking forward to switching the Christmas lights on, and I will be



Credit: Keith Bamber of Viewfinders

joined by two colourful guests. You will have to come along to see who they are!

Finally, as the early months of a new monarch's reign, there are certain to be many 'firsts'. For Romsey – specifically Romsey Extra – there will also be a 'last'. Romsey Extra has been a separate parish to Romsey Town ever since both were created in the 19th century. But March 31st 2023 will be the last day of its existence. Instead, Romsey Town will take over all but a very small part of Romsey Extra parish. The name will be retained though, as one ward of the expanded Romsey Town. It is an historic change, and warrants some event to mark it – which there will be!

Cllr Neil Gwynne
Romsey Town Mayor

Romsey Town and Romsey Extra set to merge

by Cllr John Parker, Tadburn Ward and Chair
of Romsey Extra Parish Council

Ever since Romsey Extra Parish Council (REPC) was established in 1894, newly built areas in the parish have gradually been moved into the Romsey Town Council (RTC) area. In July last year Romsey Town Council felt it was time to reassess whether new developments at Abbotswood, Cupernham Lane and Ganger Farm would be better served being part of Romsey Town. Consequently, a request was made to Test Valley Borough Council to conduct a Community Governance Review. The Borough Council has completed that review together with two periods of public consultation and has published its proposals. RTC and REPC have both agreed to these proposals.

Subject to final agreement of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, the following changes will be made with effect from 1 April 2023. REPC will cease to exist. Most of Romsey Extra will transfer to RTC. Stanbridge Earls and houses close by will transfer to Awbridge Parish Council.

RTC will then comprise four wards: Abbey, Tadburn and Cupernham wards will be enlarged so that the boundaries are the same as the Test Valley wards. Abbotswood, Ganger Farm and the new developments along Cupernham Lane will all become part of the larger Cupernham ward. The remaining parts REPC will form a new sparsely populated ward called Romsey Extra. The elections scheduled for May 2023 will see four councillors elected for each of Abbey and Tadburn wards, six councillors for Cupernham ward and one for Romsey Extra ward.

The merging of the two councils will present a more powerful, unified voice for Romsey and will allow the benefits from the new developments to be shared across all of Romsey.

A suitable event is being planned to mark these momentous changes. Details will be published when the arrangements have been finalised.



The Chief Officer can be contacted
by phone: 01794 512837
or email: chiefofficer@romseytc.org.uk
www.romseytc.org.uk

RTC Newsletter layout by The Studio, Romsey
1 Dukes Mill, Broadwater Road SO51 8PJ
www.thestudioromsey.co.uk 01794 511800

Foreign Pension Requests

If you have a pension form that requires a signature, please contact Romsey Town Council office on 01794 512837 or email: info@romseytc.org.uk to arrange an appointment with the Chief Officer to verify your pension form.

A donation to the Mayor's Charity for this service would be appreciated.

What's On in Romsey Christmas 22

www.romseytc.org.uk

26 November 6pm Light Switch On, Winter Carnival & Lantern Parade

9 December 5.30pm Saving Santa in the Market Place

19 December 7pm Christmas Carols in the Market Place

Romsey Christmas Markets

2, 9 & 16 December
11:30am - 12:30pm
 Romsey Country Market and Community Café, Romsey Town Hall

4 & 18 December
10am - 2pm
 Hampshire Farmers Christmas Market, Alma Road Car Park

4, 11 & 18 December
10am - 3pm
 Romsey Makers Market, Market Place and Corn Market

Logos at the bottom:
 Romsey Town Council, Romsey & District Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Bongo Creative, SJT Services, Rotary Club of Romsey Test, Romsey Town Carnival & Lanterns

Being a Town Councillor

by Cllr Simon Wilkinson, Abbey Ward

First Impressions

When I was asked if I'd consider being a candidate to be a Romsey Town Councillor I was a bit daunted. I didn't know what this involved. I didn't even really know what the Town Council did.

On the other hand, I didn't think, "I can't do that". My mum had previously been a Town Councillor (not of Romsey), so how hard could it be?

There is, of course, the business of standing in an election. This is scary and exciting at the same time. You hope that you will win, and preferably not by a narrow margin, but all you can try to do is increase people's awareness of who you are and what you stand for; they then have to decide for themselves if they like the sound of that, and you representing them.

The 'Job'

There are the Committees. People can be cynical about these and they can be the subject of jokes. However, this is how democracy works – in the main, it isn't just one person that decides things, but instead a group people, and so you have to have a mechanism for collectively making decisions.

Romsey Town Council has 3 main Committees. These work closely with the staff of the Town Council, being responsible for some of the decisions and setting policy.

There is one that considers planning applications in the town and surrounding district. These can range from changing just the front porch on a home, to a major housing development with dozens of houses. It also includes changes to businesses and industrial units. This Committee is very busy and very lively! Romsey Town Council cannot veto planning applications however, it can draw attention to real concerns, things that the Borough Council Planning Committee or officers might have missed.

There is also the Finance and Resources

Committee whose job is to pore over the figures to help make sure that the Council manages its finances. This isn't just staying within the budgets, but also making the best use of the small amount of money per household coming to it from the council tax. From time-to-time it also has an involvement in matters related to staffing.

Finally, there is the Building and Town Committee. This has an impact on lots of aspects of the town, practical things that replacing noticeboards, and benches; and also things affecting the profile of the town, like boosting/supporting tourism and helping the shops. The committee also helps with decisions regarding the running of the town hall itself.

Sitting above all 3 of these is the Full Town Council meeting. This usually approves the decisions of the Committees or sometimes needs to make a decision that a committee has recommended and takes care of matters that do not sit well in these Committees.

My Experiences

Even though I have felt that I didn't know much about planning regulations I've had the opportunity to raise concerns, occasionally spotting something that has been missed by the other members and have been listened to. I have also seen just a few occasions when the Town Council has done its best to object to a planning application only see it approved later on. It doesn't always have its way.

COVID-19 was a difficult time for most of us. The Town Council tried hard to carry on with its business throughout. Events in the Town Hall could no longer occur, but technology did at least allow us to meet up online and in fact the Planning Committee improved the way it works as a result.

During this time, there was the opportunity to finally solve the problem of wheelchair users not being able to get upstairs. This had been looked into before without success, but this time it looked like it might actually work. However, due to COVID-19, there was a note of caution in the air – should we really be looking to spend money on the Town Hall at this time? To me, although COVID-19 was a bad time, there

would be an end to it, and why not have the Town Hall have a bit of a boost for when we were finally to come out of lockdown and there could be wedding receptions etc. once again.

They are a good bunch of people to work with, both the staff and the other councillors, with all of us caring a lot about Romsey.

I remember being upstairs in the Town Hall a few times when there was an event happening in the town below. Besides having a good view, it did also feel a bit special!

Thoughts Now

Being a Town Councillor is a lot like doing charity work – you need to care about the

town, you have to put some time in and there really aren't many perks. However, if the town develops in a good way, this will also benefit you just a little bit too.

There is also a formal side to being a Councillor. Pomp isn't really me but I really respect the role of representing people as best as I can at Remembrance Sunday. This really isn't just another event in the diary.

I now have a much better understanding of how the Town Council works – how much it can affect how the town and district develop – and I certainly do not regret the decision to become a Councillor.

Wilder Romsey

by Cllr Neil Gwynne, Cupernham Ward

Last winter Wilder Romsey - set up by Councillors Neil Gwynne and Janet Burnage - helped organise a number of weekends of work on the Romsey canal, in order to make it clearer for pedestrians and cyclists whilst still retaining its role as a wildlife corridor. That work was undertaken with the support of officers from Test Valley Borough Council and will continue this coming winter.

However, the work last winter means there is less to do on the canal - so further project work is planned for Great Woodley estate (a community orchard and replacement of



some paved areas by wildflower planting), and Abbotswood (tidying up areas that have got too overgrown during the Covid lockdowns). Volunteers will be asked for twice a month between October and February next year (on alternating Wednesdays and Saturdays). More information can be found by adding yourself to the Wilder Romsey group email wilderromsey@googlegroups.com - contact Cllr Neil Gwynne if you would like to do this.

Audio-Visual upgrade at Romsey Town Hall

by Howard Brisland, Building Manager

Romsey Town Council have just implemented the second phase of our Audio-Visual upgrade

in the Town Hall's two principal meeting rooms. We can now offer full cinematic, meeting and conference packages in both the 70 person capacity ground floor Court Room and the second floor 150 capacity Council Chamber. With the second floor now being fully serviced by a passenger lift. Both rooms have variable lighting, can be fully blacked out and are fully serviced by bar, catering facilities and accessible toilets.

The Community of Romsey

by Suzi Shilling, Business, Events and Tourism Officer

It is easy to forget how lucky we are to live in a town which has such a welcoming and vibrant community and there is no better time in the year that reflects this than Christmas.

Every year our historic market town is magnificently transformed into a Christmas fairy-tale. The streets twinkle with lights and illuminated trees sparkle above shops whilst their windows are adorned with gifts, not to mention the centre piece of the gigantic Christmas tree which alights the piazza.

This year will be no exception, and our opening extravaganza event is the 'Big Light Switch On' and 'Winter Carnival and Lantern Parade' on Saturday 26th November from 6pm. In the past this has always been a busy time with many people venturing out, please space yourselves out along the Carnival route. To keep everyone safe please listen to instructions from our marshals and where possible leave any pets at home if you will be based in the piazza area.

Every year poor Santa seems to get stuck up on Romsey Town Hall roof! In anticipation of Santa's misfortunes, we may need an audience to coax poor Santa down on Friday 9th December and give a friendly cheer to the amazing team at Hampshire Fire and Rescue! Why not come and join in the 'Saving Santa' fun and other festivities brought to you by Romsey Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

There is no better way to rouse the Christmas spirit than with a good old sing-along in Romsey Market Place. Romsey Carols in the Market Place will take place on Monday 19th December so come wrapped up in need of a mulled wine or two!

We are lucky to have a thriving Town Centre with many independent retailers, eateries, and a mix of markets throughout the week so please come and support your local traders in the lead up to Christmas, they need your custom to thrive, think of it as an investment in your community.

Many independent pubs, hotels and restaurants feature local produce on their menus. Browse the Visit Romsey website to find places to eat. Romsey Abbey, the largest parish church in Hampshire, also have some fantastic events scheduled in the lead up to and over Christmas with some great performances such as 'The Snowman' and a Christmas Fair on Saturday 26th November. Watch out for other seasonal events in our other churches as they celebrate this very special time.

Of course, none of this is possible without the help from our wonderful volunteers and community. Hours upon hours are spent planning these events, many evenings spent in meetings planning and organising, and signing up others to come and lend a hand. Not to mention those on the night who help keep everyone safe by marshalling the roads and crowds, make and sell refreshments and entertain everybody. Having been privy to the planning of these events (and not to mention the ones all year round) I would like to thank each and every one of those amazing people who have given up their spare time so unselfishly to create what makes Romsey so special.

If you have any spare time to help with events throughout the year, whether in the planning or on the day, we would love to hear from you. As they say - many hands make light work! We are desperate to have some more volunteers for marshalling the roads and crowds and without these important volunteers, events will not be possible to go ahead. Please feel free to contact me by email suzishilling@romseytc.org.uk, we would love to have you on the team.



Double design awards for Romsey's upgraded Market Place

by Suzi Shilling, Business, Events and Tourism Officer

Romsey celebrates a double win at the Solent Quality Place awards winning the 'People's Choice Award' and the 'Judge's Choice Award' against stiff competition for its scheme to upgrade Market Place in Romsey.

Romsey Town Council, in partnership with Test Valley Borough Council and Hampshire County Council created a new public piazza in the heart of Romsey to make it a safer, more attractive and inviting place for local residents, businesses and visitors to the town.

Councillor Edward Heron, Executive Lead Member for Transport and Environment Strategy at Hampshire County Council said: "Through this scheme we have been able to invest in Romsey's future at a critical time when town centres up and down the country are at risk. The large piazza style space around the

Lord Palmerston statue is also ideal for staging public events that will draw more trade in the town and boost the local economy."

The high-quality materials used for the scheme were selected specifically to be complementary to the historic town. The improvements included new seating, bins, cycle parking, and planting. Following completion of the scheme, new cafés and a pub have opened in Market Place, increasing the vibrancy of the centre as a focal point in the Romsey community, where regular markets and events are also held. In shortlisting the scheme, the judges agreed that the improvements create an accessible, attractive, cleaner, livelier, and safer town centre with an improved street scene to widen the town's appeal and increase its economic viability and vitality.

The Solent Quality of Place Awards recognise beautiful and thoughtfully designed developments across the Solent region.

Solent Quality Place Awards are organised by Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH), which seeks to highlight placemaking excellence in developments that contribute to improving the economic, social, cultural and environmental life of those who live, work, learn and relax within the Solent region.

It's sometimes the small things!

by Cllr John Critchley, Abbey Ward

Sometimes it is quite small things that need doing around the town in order to solve a problem or make an improvement. These can make a real difference to the overall smartness and quality of life in Romsey.

Councillors and Town Hall staff are involved in providing the best we can for our town. Often, we liaise with TVBC or HCC to achieve the outcome because we are not responsible for the actual work - or finance. These can take a while to achieve unless there are safety dangers involved but

Some examples are:

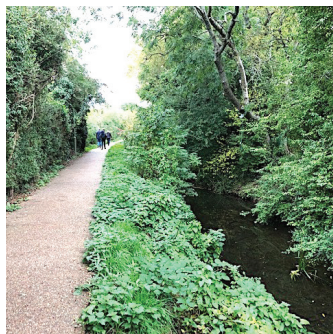
Trimming trees over footpaths for the convenience of pedestrians. Tidy and trim back

the vegetation at the old burial ground, a quiet corner of Romsey. A replacement seat for Church Street/Church Place after the oak one deteriorated. Replacing a sign that was knocked over.

We have several other small projects in the pipeline around Romsey, some larger like footpath remedial work, and some small.

Upgrading the Town Hall has also been completed: providing a lift to the large Council Chamber, converting to low energy lighting and improving new audio visual equipment for films and events.

If there is anything that you think could be improved in your area please let us know, because while we try to be aware of issues it is local residents who know best. Contact details for your Ward Councillors and the Town Hall are on the Romsey Town Council website (romseytc.org.uk)



Town Council Supporting Local Groups

by Cllr Nik Daas, Abbey Ward

Over the last year Romsey Town Council have granted over £4,500 worth of cash to good causes across Romsey. Some of these local causes include: Romsey Youth Carers, Romsey Chamber Music Festival, Unity, The Beggars Fair and The Romsey Carnival.

The Town Council recognises the fantastic work that local groups and volunteers do for

Romsey, and it has supported some great projects with this funding. The funding has gone towards supporting Young Carers in the community have some respite as well as supporting some of the large events, like The Beggars Fair.

If you are a part of a local group that wishes to apply for funding, please visit the grants page of the Romsey Town Council website (romseytc.org.uk) or visit the Town Hall.



Council Meetings 2023

All Council and Committee meetings are held in Romsey Town Hall at 7.30pm and are open to the public to come along and watch. A complete list of meetings, along with Agendas and Minutes can be viewed on our website at www.romseytc.org.uk

Full Council

17th January
21st March
11th April
23rd May
18th July
19th September
21st November

Building & Town

7th February
18th April
6th June
1st August
3rd October
5th December

Finance & Resources

3rd January
28th February
2nd May
27th June
22nd August
24th October
12th December

Planning

5th January
2nd February
2nd March
30th March
27th April
25th May
22nd June
20th July
17th August
14th September
12th October
9th November
7th December

Grants

Since the last Newsletter grants have been awarded to the following:

Beggars Fair	£300.00
Romsey Show	£500.00
Unity	£700.00
Romsey Charities Fair	£150.00
Romsey Male Voice Choir	£150.00
Bringing Together Andover	£150.00

If you would like to apply for a grant for your organisation please visit our website where you can view application criteria and download the grant application form.

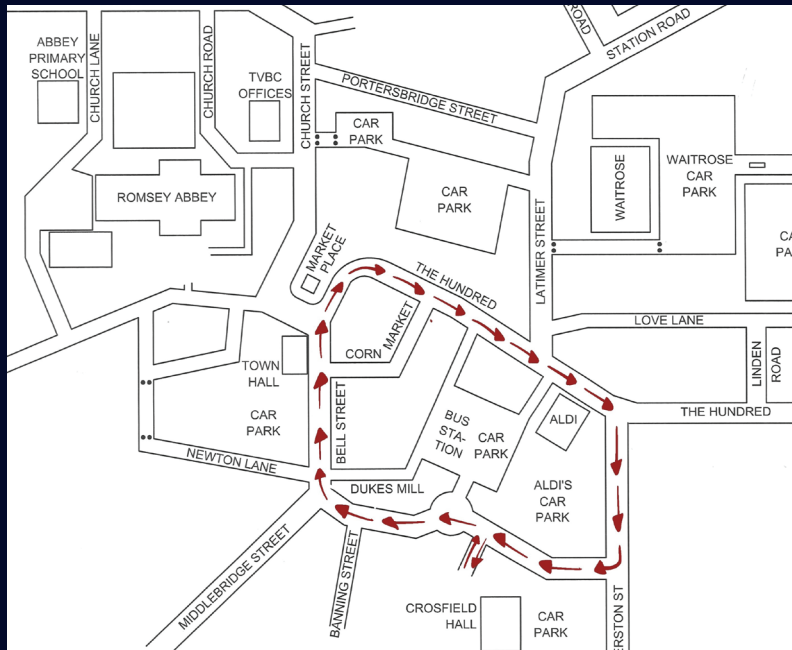
Christmas Events

26 November - 6pm

Light Switch On, Winter Carnival and Lantern Parade

This year the Lantern Parade will assemble at Crosfield Hall along with the Winter Carnival. The Lantern Parade will leave first and make its way down Broadwater Road and Bell Street to the Market Place. It will then proceed down the Hundred to Palmerston Street and then back to the Crosfield Hall. The Winter Carnival will follow but wait in Bell Street until the Christmas Lights are switched on at 6.30pm at which point it will follow the same route through The Hundred and back to Crosfield Hall.

Note: If you are coming along to watch, we please ask that you keep the parade route roads clear for its safe progress through the town.



Lantern Parade and Winter Carnival route.

2, 9 & 16 December – 11.30am to 12.30pm

Romsey Country Market and Community Café

Held inside Romsey Town Hall, this is a wonderful opportunity to buy homemade Christmas food and gifts and to make new friends over a cup of tea and a mince pie.

4 December – 10am to 2pm

Hampshire Farmers Christmas Market

Held in the Alma Road car park, this market focuses on Christmas items and is a lovely chance to purchase fresh, local, seasonal foods.

4, 11 & 18 December - 10am to 3pm

Romsey Makers Market

Held in the Market Place and Corn Market, there will be stalls selling handmade Christmas gifts and food from local crafters, makers & bakers.

9 December - 5.30pm

Saving Santa

A highlight for many at Christmas, Romsey shops will open into the evening offering an extra special seasonal welcome to customers. We hear Father Christmas is expected to visit at 6.45 pm and we have Romsey Fire Station standing by in case he makes his usual navigational error, lands on a roof and needs rescuing.

18 December - 10am to 2pm

Hampshire Farmers Christmas Market

Held in the Alma Road car park, this market focuses on Christmas items and is a lovely chance to purchase fresh, local, seasonal foods.

19 December - 7pm

Carols in the Market Place

Gather around the Christmas tree in the Market Place for a festive evening of carol singing and live music.

Note: A number of town centre roads will be closed for these events, please look for diversion signs.

Romsey Town Councillors

ABBEY WARD

Cllr John Critchley
Tel: 01794 515477
Mob: 07831 870120
Email: cllrjcritchley@romseytc.org.uk

Cllr Ian Culley
Tel: 01794 522298
Mob: 07835 087955
Email: cllriculley@romseytc.org.uk

Cllr Nik Daas
Mob: 07443 482919
Email: cllrndaas@romseytc.org.uk

Cllr Sally Lamb
Mob: 07793 115944
Email: cllrslamb@romseytc.org.uk

Cllr Simon Wilkinson
Tel: 01794 518240
Mob: 07739 802739
Email: cllrswilkinson@romseytc.org.uk

Cllr Claire Wise
Tel: 01794 367492
Mob: 07769 836830
Email: cllrwise@romseytc.org.uk

TADBURN WARD

Cllr Janet Cairney
Tel: 01794 503336
Mob: 07840 989722
Email: cllrjcairney@romseytc.org.uk

Cllr Mark Cooper
Tel: 01794 516028
Mob: 07774 638310
Email: cllrcoop@romseytc.org.uk

Cllr John Parker
Mob: 07825 514348
Email: cllrjparker@romseytc.org.uk

Cllr Matthew Southey
Tel: 01794 521379
Mob: 07816 901442
Email: cllrmsouthey@romseytc.org.uk

Cllr Karen Dunleavy
Mob: 07977 163198
Email: cllrkdunleavy@romseytc.org.uk

CUPERNHAM WARD

Cllr Dorothy Baverstock
Tel: 01794 517552
Mob: 07866 138350
Email: cllrdbaverstock@romseytc.org.uk

Cllr Janet Burnage
Tel: 01794 515815
Mob: 07764 584522
Email: cllrjburnage@romseytc.org.uk

Cllr Neil Gwynne
Tel: 01794 368053
Mob: 07884 023646
Email: cllrngwynne@romseytc.org.uk

Cllr John Ray
Tel: 01794 522810
Email: cllrjray@romseytc.org.uk