



## MAYORS SUMMER MESSAGE

I grew up on the fringes of one market town (Lymington) and spent the first half of my working life living on the fringes of another (Wimborne). So it was inevitable that when I moved to Romsey in 2011, it was to the edge of town (Sandy Lane).

What initially brought me to Romsey (a decade earlier) was the Plaza Theatre, where some of you may have seen me treading the boards, and where I am now in my tenth year as Chair. Being Trustee of such a great place as the Plaza was honour enough. As recently as three years ago I'd never had any involvement in local government, so becoming Mayor was simply not conceivable. That it has happened is a massive honour and a huge source of pride for myself, my wife Kathrina, and the rest of my family. I look forward to meeting as many of you as I can, and supporting as many good causes as possible, during the year.

The two causes that I will be particularly striving to support are the equal beneficiaries of whatever funds the Mayoral charity events can raise – namely George's Trust and the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust. As well as the Mayor's concert at the Abbey, there will be an event in October at the Plaza and (hopefully) an evening event in the Town Hall next spring.

Events are beginning to resurface, after the tough years of the pandemic. And I am keen that, as all these events start to come back to life, I help in whatever way I can. So please do use the opportunity to invite me along, via the Romsey Town Council website, if that helps with a bit of publicity (if nothing else!)



Mayor of Romsey, Cllr Neil Gwynne with his wife Kathrina

As I have said, I am very familiar with living in market towns, and have 30 years of experience elsewhere to compare Romsey with. But there is no comparison, because Romsey is without doubt the place with the strongest community spirit, and the highest number of volunteers! It is a genuine privilege to be Mayor of such a lovely place.

**Neil Gwynne**  
Romsey Town Mayor

## TOWN COUNCIL NEWS



Abbey Benches (above) Round Seat (below)



Some of the seats around Romsey need replacing and we are looking at this. Some belong to Romsey Town Council but others are TVBC assets.

In the past, oak seats have been purchased, in keeping with the historic and conservation areas such as Abbey Place but because of the now considerable cost of replacing with oak we are looking at other products that will cost less and require less maintenance.

Many towns now use more modern designs in longer lasting materials such as metal, recycled plastic and concrete.

The Town Council and TVBC are looking at these alternatives for future replacements, a few of which, we recognise, are now quite urgent.

## WILDER ROMSEY

Many of you may have heard of the Romsey Future initiative – aimed at ensuring good communication between Test Valley Borough Council and the Romsey population, as well as putting local residents in charge of describing what it is that they want and helping to make it happen.

Many things have come out of Romsey Future – one of which was a workstream called Natural Environment and Sustainability. This was a mix of improving access to the natural world, coupled with subjects such as waste management and recycling.

Well, over time everything changes. And in this case, what changed was that the most vocal and obvious support for this workstream came down heavily in favour of the natural environment work. Not a surprise, given how many local residents that there are with such an interest – not to mention a very local nature reserve!



Consequently – with the help of grants from Romsey Borough councillors – Wilder Romsey was launched. With a focus of helping all relevant organisations share information and volunteers – hence clearance work on the Romsey canal, and tree and wildflower planting.

If you are interested in being kept up to date with what is happening with Wilder Romsey (half of its management team are Romsey Town councillors) then take a look at [www.wilder-romsey.org](http://www.wilder-romsey.org).

**Cllr Neil Gwynne**  
**Cupnham Ward**

## SOUTH OF TOWN CENTRE REDEVELOPMENT



The proposal to redevelop the area of Romsey known as the south of the town centre (SOTC) was initially conceived almost ten years ago and is now being looked at in detail.

This will provide retail/hospitality/leisure space and flats on the current bus station site and a new community space to replace Crosfield hall is also being considered. The possibility of a new location for ALDI could mean combined retail and flats with extra parking on the current ALDI car park. There will be space for bus access.

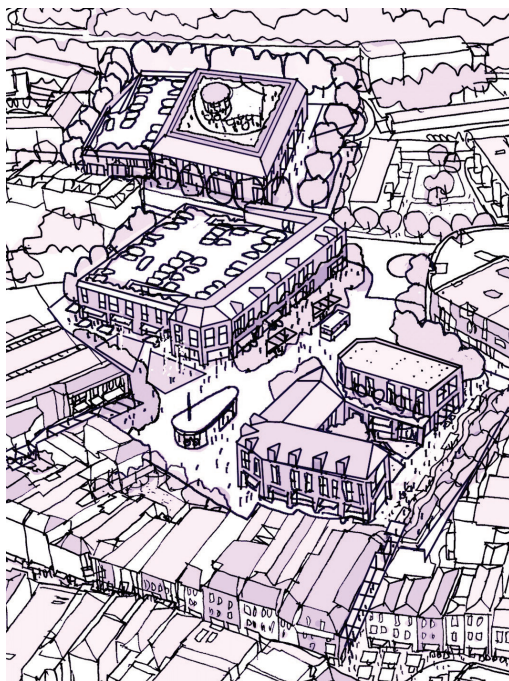
In 2018 a Citizens Assembly made many recommendations to inform future decisions. The SOTC redevelopment proposal is now reaching the point of making decisions about the development and the design. This continues to be overseen by Romsey Future, a partnership between Test Valley Borough Council and the Romsey community. Once agreed this is likely to be achieved over a number of years.

Councillors from both Test Valley Borough Council and Romsey Town Council sit on the Romsey Future committee, and many other people from the community are involved as stakeholders.

You can find much more information at [www.romseyfuture.org.uk](http://www.romseyfuture.org.uk).

If you would like to comment on the proposals or if you have an idea for improvements to your neighbourhood please do get in touch with me by email: [cllrjcritchley@romseytc.org.uk](mailto:cllrjcritchley@romseytc.org.uk)

**Cllr John Critchley**  
**Abbey Ward**



## GOVERNING ROMSEY

In December of last year, our excellent local historian Phoebe Merrick sent a piece in to the Romsey Advertiser called Heritage: Governing Romsey. It referred to the formation of the civil parishes of Romsey Town and Romsey Extra in 1894. And to the fact that Romsey Town has grown – and Romsey Extra shrunk – twice since then.

The arrangement between these two parishes – sometimes called ring or doughnut parishes, where an urban central parish had a rural parish surrounding it – made sense when populations were much smaller, and nobody had a motor car! It was then a significant journey for a person to travel from the borders of Romsey Town to Southampton or Winchester – so, mostly, Romsey Extra residents didn't. They travelled to and from Romsey Town instead.

But now, over 125 years later, things are different. Now it makes absolute sense for the new developments like Abbotswood, Kings Chase and Whitenap to be as much a part of Romsey Town as is Great Woodley or The Hundred!

The UK's Boundary Commissioners thought so some years back when they expanded the Test Valley Borough wards of Abbey, Tadburn and Cupernham. Now Romsey Town is – hopefully – set to follow the exact same pattern. With the added bonus that the historic name of Romsey Extra will not be lost – it will instead become a fourth ward within the expanded Romsey Town parish.

**Cllr Mark Cooper**  
**Tadburn Ward**

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## LINDEN COURT

A supported living home in Romsey has been criticised for removing a stair lift, assistance cords and outside taps by local councillors.

Linden Court, on Linden Road, was set up specifically for elderly residents on a long-term contract in which they can be supported by an independent living warden plus other amenities such as help cords in case of emergencies.

However, in a recent letter, residents were informed that the building would be undergoing changes which would see amenities they rely on removed. Residents had 28 days to respond to the consultation, subsequently the works went ahead.

Romsey Cllrs Nik Daas and John Critchley met with residents of Linden Court to discuss the changes.

Cllr Nik Daas said: "These changes are poor tactics by Aster to try and oust residents from the place they call home. What has angered me the most was the removal of the stairlift. There are a number of elderly residents on the first floor, one who is partially blind and another in their eighties, how can they be expected to cope with such changes."



# DUKES MILL

Many residents have been in contact with regards to increased rubbish in the Dukes Mill area. A number of them have advised that it is largely Dominos pizza boxes which are the main litter issue in this area, due to a lack of bins outside the Dominos store.

I initially sent an official letter requesting Dominos to take some action on the litter issue. I then followed this up by going into the store and speaking with the Store Manager. I further explained the issue of litter in Dukes Mill and the stream – the store manager was happy to support the community on this.

The store has a small bin inside however, it is tucked away at the back. After discussion with the store manager, they are now going to move the bin to the front of the shop. I hope that the movement of the Dominos bin to a more visible location will prompt people to bin it here.

In addition, I am working with the team at Test Valley Borough Council to acquire a new bin in the area of Dukes Mill, however this is still a work in progress.

**Cllr Nik Daas**  
**Abbey Ward**

COUNCIL MEETINGS 2022			
Romsey Town Council meetings are held at 7.30pm, Romsey Town Hall, 1 Market Place, Romsey SO51 8YZ on the dates listed below. Members of the public are welcome to attend. A complete list, along with Agendas and Minutes can be viewed on our website.			
Full Council	Building & Town	Finance & Resources	Planning
26 July	16 August	5 July	21 July
27 September	18 October	6 September	18 August
15 November	6 December	8 November	15 September
			13 October
			10 November
			8 December

GRANTS			
Since the last Newsletter grants have been awarded to the following:			
Baby Necessities	£300	Unity	£500
Victim Support	£100	Romsey Carnival	£395
Romsey Young Carers	£1,000	Victim Support	£100
Romsey Chamber Music Festival	£1,000	Unity	£100
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.			

FOREIGN PENSION REQUESTS	
If you have a pension form that requires a signature, please contact Romsey Town Council office on 01794 512837 or email: <a href="mailto:info@romseytc.org.uk">info@romseytc.org.uk</a> 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.	

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