

CROSStalk



Princes Risborough Town Council: Making it Matter - Making it Count

Clearly I write at a concerning time for some residents as the uncertainty of Covid-19 is having a significant effect across the whole country, and worldwide. You can read more about how we are tackling this on page 11. Despite the ongoing challenges, this issue of Crosstalk aims to remind you of some of the amazing things that are already taking place across our town.

The largest investment in the history of the Council; the £750,000 extension of the Community Centre is underway and will result in a modern, attractive facility and wonderful venue for a range of occasions. I am especially pleased that both construction and design contracts were awarded to local businesses. You can follow progress on this and other projects via our social media channels.

We have received some great feedback on our free parking initiative for 2020. This is already having a positive effect on our local retailers and I know is greatly appreciated by you, our residents. Please be sure to take a little extra time in our High Street next weekend; we have some wonderful retailers who need our continued support, especially at this time. At a recent Local Government conference, Princes Risborough Town Council was highly praised for the approach we are taking on Economic Regeneration.

During these past five years, four of which I have had the privilege of serving as your Mayor & Chairman, the Council has continued to develop and evolve. The Council of 2020 is so different from the Council of 2015. Today we provide Devolved Services (grass cutting, flowerbeds, maintenance) on behalf of Wycombe District and Bucks County Councils, as well as many of the surrounding parishes. We run the Thursday and Farmers Markets, manage the Community Centre and have taken over the running of both Festival week and the Christmas Lights Switch-on. We have devoted significant resources to our Green Agenda including reducing our electricity use by over 80%.

Last year when I spoke at the Annual Town Meeting, I talked about the Town Council stepping in to safeguard community assets, and stepping up to ensure our biggest projects would be delivered. With over £1.5 million invested so far over the past five years, we hope you agree we have made it count. We have great plans to continue investing over the next five years and hope that you will appreciate the work that your Town Council is doing to make Princes Risborough and the surrounding areas a fantastic destination, successful and attractive.



Cllr Matthew Walsh – Chairman



Biggest Investment in Town Council History



The proposed new function room

FREE PARKING
In both Horns Lane & The Mount Car Parks
ALL WEEKEND, EVERY WEEKEND IN 2020

Annual Town Meeting

Thursday 26th March

Starting 7.15pm

**Community Centre,
Stratton Road**

**How your money
is spent**
(see pages 6 & 7)

Economic Regeneration Update

Our High Street, along with many others up and down the country, is faced with many challenges. As a Council, Economic Regeneration is high on our list of priorities and we work closely with our existing retailers and town centre businesses to increase footfall into the town, whilst also actively supporting and encouraging businesses to set up and grow in our area.

Economic Regeneration is not a quick fix but a long-term process, through various projects, partnerships and initiatives we aim to deliver social, environmental and economic development and growth in our community.

As a result of a detailed health check survey with our town centre businesses, we have invested in free weekend car parking for both WDC car parks, which will run during 2020. Our retailers are already seeing the benefit of this and many have reported an increase in year on year trade and footfall. Local residents, community groups and clubs also benefit from free weekend parking with various activities, events and gatherings that take place not just in our High Street but in our parks, leisure centre and churches.

We are keen to attract shoppers from neighbouring towns and villages and recently held a networking event at RAF High Wycombe, where several of our town

centre businesses and those based in our Retail Parks had a chance to meet with officers and to introduce their businesses. As a result of this networking event, over 30 Risborough businesses are now being promoted within the RAF community.

Additionally, many of you will have received the Retailer brochure that was distributed to over 8,000 homes within the local area. The participating businesses offered discounts to shoppers through the festive period and New Year and we hope to run this again later in the year.

From an environmental point of view, our aim as a Council is to make Princes Risborough a "single-use plastic-free zone" by 2020 at all the Council organized events, including our Farmers Market, weekly market, festival and in our town centre. We are currently working with businesses to understand their packaging needs and to see where we can assist in replacing any single-use plastics with more eco-friendly options.

In the next few months, we will continue to work both behind the scenes with our retailers, as well as on our public realm vision which is instrumental in moving Risborough into the 21st century. We also hope to undertake a "Shoppers Survey" so we can ascertain and understand your thoughts on our town.



Farmers Markets

As part of our Economic Regeneration plans last year, we organized several Farmers Markets around our historic Grade II listed Market House. Featuring predominately local producers who are handpicked by us and all of whom commit to our stance on not allowing any "single-use plastics" our Farmers Markets feature music, food & drink demos with chefs and local eateries, a place to sit, eat and chat as well as activities to keep the kids entertained!

Due to the success and input from visitors and our producers, we are thrilled to announce that as of May 2020 these will now take place bi-monthly on the third Saturday of the month.

Sadly, we had to cancel the February Farmers Market due to "Storm Dennis" but the next market on May 16th will be bigger & dare we say better than before! We've got an Indian cookery demo, and all our favourite producers plus a few newbies joining us.

Please do put the dates in your diary and do give our Facebook or Instagram page a follow to keep updated on the events.

Future Markets

May 16th (9-2 pm) July 18th (9-2 pm)
Sept 19th (9-2 pm) Nov 21st (9-2pm)

We look forward to seeing you there!

P.S We are currently sold out of pitches for May, but if you are a local producer, food vendor or restaurant/chef that is interested in attending a future market, please do get in touch via email.

towncouncil@princesrisboroughtowncouncil.gov.uk



Becky, owner of Cymbeline told us
"Since the introduction of free parking at the weekend, Saturday trading has been notably up with my customers enjoying a more relaxed shopping experience"



David, the owner of Fonehouse told us
"Business for us compared to this time last year is up, and it's noticeably busier and feels much better in the town centre on a weekend"



WE ARE RECRUITING!

We are looking for maintenance team members to join our team!

We are looking to expand our Maintenance Team and have the following vacancies available:

Maintenance Team Member, Gardener for Stratton Memorial Garden and an Apprentice Maintenance Team Member.

Please visit the Town Council website for an Application Form. Applications must be received by 3rd April 2020.

THE NEW



Well, after a break-neck race to make the deadline, the dissolution of the County Council and all four District Councils will happen on schedule on the 31st March and will be superseded by the new unitary authority. Every effort has been made for the smoothest possible switch over when the five separate councils merge their services, however for various reasons (legal contracts, etc) certain components of the transition will take several years to be fully integrated. Services such as education, highways, adult and children's social services, planning and the environment will all be the responsibility of the new Authority, making it easier for the public to access. Once the costs of the transition have been accounted for there will be scope for large scale savings going forward, with services being streamlined (rather than duplicated) and hopefully transformed. People are often wary of change, but in this instance, I think there is every reason to feel positive for the future of our new unitary Council.

Of course, your local Town Council will still be here (as it has been since 1894) providing you with its current services.

Cllr Alan Turner



The Town Council

2020/21 PRECEPT

The Town Council has now set its precept for the forthcoming financial year. This is the portion of the Council Tax which will be collected by the new Unitary Authority, "Buckinghamshire Council", on behalf of the Town Council and provided to the Council to pay for our work in the Town. In estimating our projected funding requirements for the forthcoming financial year councillors have to take into account current and projected inflationary pressures and ensure that we are able to fund planned projects, maintain our properties and parks, give grant funding to other local groups and organizations and, of course, pay our staff fair wages that reflect their tremendous work for us. Through prudent financial management and efficient forward planning of our resources we have been able to keep this year's increase to the Precept at 1% - or viewed in a different way, an increase in just over £1 a year on a band D property. The Town Council has endeavoured to offer good value for money over the last 5 year term and have done our best to make every pound count.

Cllr Alan Turner



Introducing Cllr. Stewart Baxter

Hi, I'm Stewart and I am extremely proud to have been selected as a Town Councillor serving the residents of our wonderful town and its surrounding villages.

My family and I moved to Princes Risborough in July 2010, and this near decade of being a Risborough resident encourages me to reflect upon what a wonderful town we live in.

We are blessed with a historic and beautiful town - with no less than three conservation areas including the Market Square, plus adjacent Monks Risborough and Askett.

In addition we are part of the stunning Chilterns AONB and are surrounded by precious green belt countryside. My wife, my two children (who both attend local schools) and I moved to this unique part of the south east of England because of its beauty and incomparable natural amenities which deserve to be preserved for future generations. We are very lucky to live in Risborough.

However, in my opinion, we are also very lucky in having a Town Council that understands the responsibility of protecting this unique environment whilst also planning strategically for the future.

WDC's Local Plan will have a significant effect on Princes Risborough in coming years. I am a firm believer that faced with change we should aim to make change work to our advantage.

So, if you would like to know why I joined the Town Council then here goes. This is a team that believes in getting it done to the benefit of Risborough area residents in a planned and sensitive manner as the world around us evolves.

I believe that there's much more yet to come from this Town Council to preserve, invest in, and plan for our town and our futures as proud Risborough residents.

Cllr Stewart Baxter

VE Day 75

A Celebration of European Peace



The 8th May 2020 will mark 75 years since the guns fell silent at the end of the European Campaign of the Second World War. In order to mark three-quarters of a century of peace in Western Europe a street party will be held in Market Square (Community Centre if wet) from noon on Friday 8th May - the new date for the early May bank holiday. Refreshments will be available to purchase or you can bring a picnic and the people of Risborough can come together in the town centre to mark the event as was done across the country in 1945.

We would encourage people to come along dressed in red, white and blue and if you live on or around the High Street consider sticking a union flag out of the window to help us mark the occasion.

As part of this the council will also be looking to create a small display to be shown under the Market House on the day - if anyone has any photographs or memories of VE Day in Princes Risborough do get in touch with me (nathan@princesrisboroughtowncouncil.gov.uk).

We will be working over the coming weeks and will provide more information about the event through our social media and on our website closer to the time.

Black Prince

Princes Risborough is not a town familiar to many people, and even many of those who know it maybe unaware of the origins of the name, which it inherited from Edward of Woodstock, the son of King Edward 3rd, known as the Black Prince, who had a mansion (a hunting lodge) located on what is now the Mount car park, along Stratton Road.

With the imminent expansion of the town, the Town Council is looking at ways to raise its profile and increase the attraction of the Town Centre. The acquisition of the former NatWest building, where terms are agreed with CraftYard, and the recently introduced Farmers Markets in Market Square are two examples, others are in the pipeline.

2020 is the 690th anniversary of the birth of the Black Prince, which offers an opportunity for the town to benefit from this piece of history. As a result the Town Council is working towards an event to be held later in the year that will bring our community together in an exciting & memorable way!

The Black Prince lived a very full life, taking part in both the battles of Poitiers and Crecy. It was at the latter, when greatly outnumbered by the French army, that the English with their archers were triumphant. After the battle the Black Prince paid tribute to his slain adversary, the King of Bohemia, a mercenary. The King's motto was Ich Dien (I serve) and his emblem was three white feathers. Both were adopted by the Black Prince and are now used by the Prince of Wales.

As the Black Prince used the area of what is now Princes Risborough for hunting, the Town Council invite people to come up with a modern dish based on a medieval meal. The Town Council is working on an event, to be held later this year, at which this dish can be judged.

Cllr Ian Pearce





#MAKING IT HAPPEN

How your money is spent

Princes Risborough Town Council receives £102.87* per annum from the Council Tax from each household.

**Based on a Band D property, 20/21 Council Tax*



Parks

- 114 Trees
- 22 Acres of Parks
- 18 Dog Waste Bins
- 5 Playgrounds & Equipment
- Green Recycling
- Stratton Memorial Garden



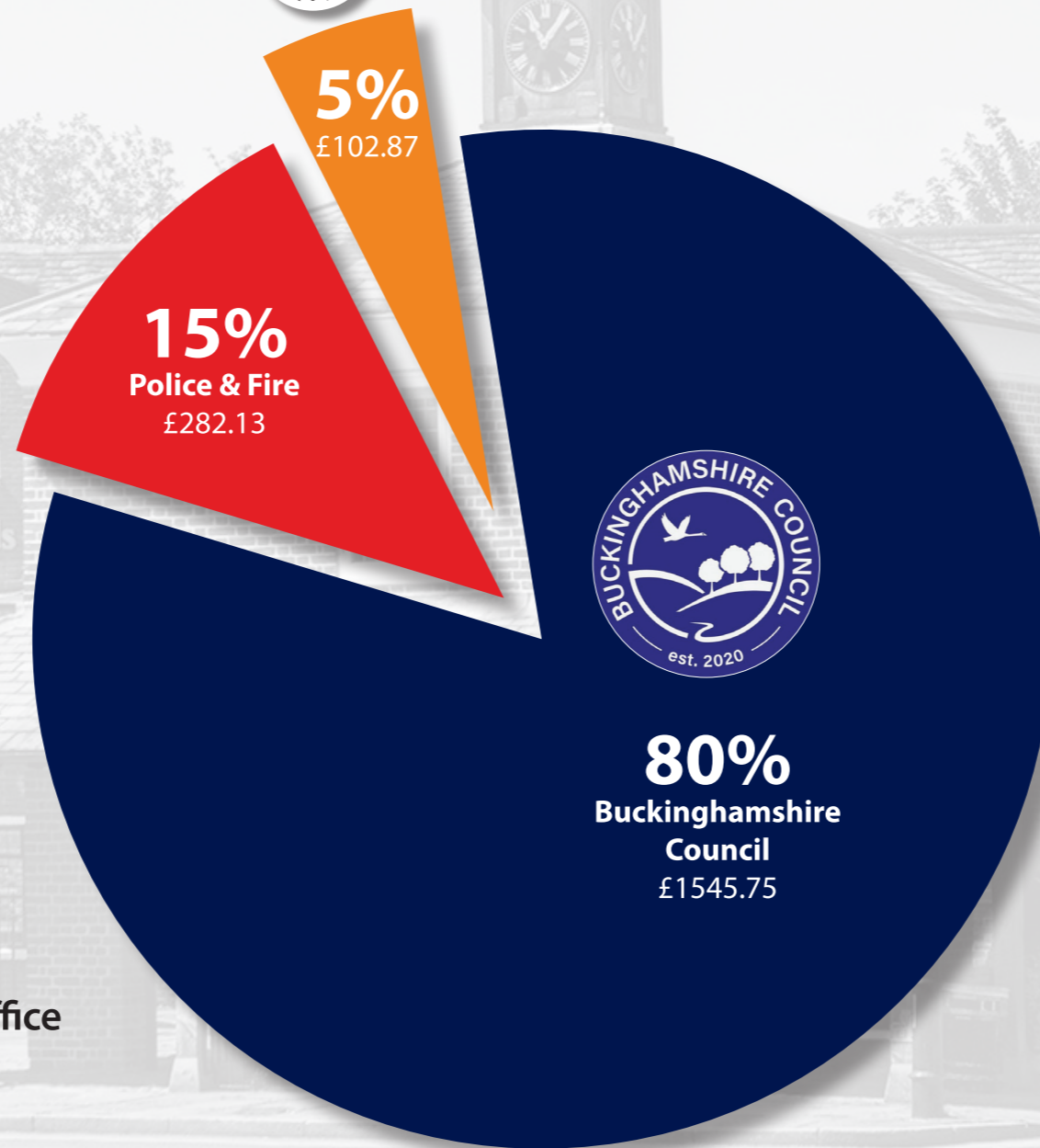
Buildings

- Risborough Community Centre
39 High Street
Dovecote, St. Dunstons Park
(Grade II Listed)
- Market House *(Grade II Listed)*
- War Memorials



Costs

- Staff Remuneration
- Training for Councillors & Staff
- Running cost for Town Council Office



Maintaining our town

- 6000 Plants for Beds & Borders
- 530 LED Street Lights
- 13 Noticeboards
- 54 Benches/Seating
- 7 Defibrillators
- Water Drinks Station, Wades Park
- Machinery & Equipment



Community

- Summer Festival
- Christmas Lights Switch on
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Outdoor Cinema
- Annual Town Meeting
- Senior Tea Dance
- Farmers and Thursday Markets
- Crosstalk Newsletter
- Social Media Promotions
- Website
- Grants to Schools, Churches & Local Organisations

Eco-friendly Easter Tree!

The vibrant and colourful Easter Egg tree displays outside M&S are a visual treat for many residents, schoolchildren and passers-by. However, the use of polystyrene eggs is something that the Town Council have been mindful of and were keen to avoid this year.

Having looked at various options on how we can continue this annual tradition but in a more environmentally friendly way, this year will be providing local school children and clients of The Princes Centre with wooden chick decorations to decorate that will happily hang in the trees.

The Council is actively encouraging local schools, children and parents to look at natural materials when decorating the chicks, such as food colouring instead of paint, feathers, raffia and bio-degradable glitters. Our climate does mean that the little chicks will fare better if they are weather-proofed and whilst in previous years we have recommended PVA glue to seal any paint, there are plenty of other less harmful options such as linseed oil that can be used instead.

Over 900 chicks will be placed in the trees by volunteers on Friday 27th March in time for Easter, and hope that you enjoy looking at them.

If you are able to assist on the day, then please do drop us a line at towncentre@princesrisboroughtowncouncil.gov.uk

21st March - 11th April
PRINCES RISBOROUGH TOWN CENTRE

EASTER egg HUNT

When you spot an orange egg in a window, pop inside to receive a stamp. Bring your form to either The Library, Fullers Flowers, Dukes Wine Bar or Michael Graham Estate Agents between **11-18th April** to get your reward!

Find the Easter Bunny's Orange Eggs in the Town Centre shop windows!
FIND 10 OR MORE EGGS TO WIN A PRIZE!

Egg Hunter name(s): _____
 Tel/Mob: _____
 Email: _____

Events for our Community
For further information on our privacy policy please visit our website Please tick this box to be kept informed of events in Princes Risborough
www.princesrisboroughtowncouncil.gov.uk

GET 10 OR MORE EGGS STAMPED BELOW TO CLAIM YOUR PRIZE!

Thanks to all of our retailers and businesses for taking part

Gymbeline **TIM RUSS** **Wainwright's Shoe Shops** **Kado**
SALLY'S **MICHAEL GRAHAM** **THE DAISY CHAIN**
K&B **JNP** **OXFAM** **fonehouse** **Dukes** **TSB**

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA FOR UPDATES #EGGHUNTPT
[risboroughtowncouncil](#) [Princesris](#) [princesrisboroughtc](#)

Pick up your Easter Egg Hunt Forms at the Library or participating High Street Retailers



Tree Charter Day Charter for Trees, Woods and People

As part of National Tree Charter Day 2019, Princes Risborough Town Council (PRTC) with support from Risborough Environmental Group (REG) planted 10 new saplings in Wades Park to start our contribution to reforesting the UK. Trees are not only great for carbon absorption and cleaning our air; they improve our soil, reduce the risk of flooding and help to enhance our townscape, whilst providing homes for wildlife and giving us a place to relax.

So next time you're walking around our beautiful town, please take stock of how fortunate we are to live in such a green landscape and how important our trees are in making our townscape what it is. PRTC is now a Tree Charter Branch and is therefore committed to looking after the trees we have and planting more where possible. For further information about the Tree Charter, please visit [Tree Charter](#) and look out for this year's events in November 2020.

Cllr Lee Byrne

COMING SOON TO RISBOROUGH

Water Refill Station

In late 2019, Prince Risborough Town Council (PRTC) agreed to adopt a single-use plastics policy. This formalises our commitment to reducing the Town Council's environmental impact and gives us a platform to encourage our residents and businesses to make more positive choices for the environment, particularly regarding single-use plastic reduction. We've recently installed a plastic recycling bin in King George V Park and will soon be installing a water refill station at Wades Park. Special thanks to Cllrs Gary Hall, David Knights and Alan Turner who generously funded the project with their ward money from Wycombe District Council.

Full details of the unveiling will follow soon, but with a water fountain, bottle refill tap and even a dish for your four-legged friends, we're confident this will be a great asset for our community and encourage you all to make use of it when passing by. Remember to carry around your reusable water bottles and work with us to help reduce our carbon footprint and together we can help make Risborough that little bit cleaner and greener.



Art in the Park

It doesn't seem like seven years ago I came to my fellow Councillors with a proposal to create a display of work by local artists along the fence in Wades Park. In those years we have gone from 6 pieces in 2014 to 17 works last year.



Last year we were massively oversubscribed and had fantastic 28 artists submit work to be included. This included art in various media including embroidery, textiles, digital art, pyrography, 3D printing, and ceramics as well as more traditional paintings and drawings.

This year we have expanded Art in the Park and once again we are looking for artists to get involved. We are looking for artists that work in any media. So if you paint, draw, sculpt, sew, burn or employ any other method to create your art we would love to see it. We will even work out a way to display your performance art if that's your art!

Once again as part of the Town Festival, Becky from Cymbeline one of our lovely High Street retailers is sponsoring the event and will be choosing her favourite piece. Her favourite will receive a year's Friends membership of the Royal Academy.

Contact the Town Council or visit the website for an application form and I look forward to seeing the amazing art that this town produces.

Cllr Iain McLauchlan

Democracy in our Schools

The Town Council is currently running a brand new initiative across all schools in Princes and Monks Risborough called the "Democracy Project Game"



Princes Risborough Town Council is keen to help educate children about the importance and responsibility of voting, in what will soon be their democratic right. We feel that by letting the pupils decide where money should go, they will learn about the democracy process and how their decisions will benefit their school.

Each school council has been choosing their two final projects that will make it on to the ballot paper. Our thanks to Wycombe District Council who have been kind enough to loan us their polling booths and ballot boxes from the recent General Election, thus creating a real world experience for the pupils.

Having seen many parents cast their vote at previous elections, it was great to watch the pupils cast their vote with such enthusiasm.

The Town Council has made a total of £5000 available for this Project and we will provide further updates as we progress around the schools.

Cllr Matthew Walsh

Beat the Burglar Keep Your Home Secure

During the dark winter evenings Cllrs. Nathan Davis, Matthew Walsh and Jan Roberts worked with the local Neighbourhood Policing Team in the campaign against burglary in Princes Risborough.

The councillors went out on patrol with local PCSOs looking for houses that appeared vulnerable to burglary including looking for unsecured open windows, unilluminated houses or anything else that makes it appear someone wasn't home. Houses which appeared vulnerable received a leaflet which provided advice to the residents about how to make their house more secure.



For further information about how to make your home less appealing to criminals visit thamesvalley.police.uk or contact your local neighbourhood policing team



Annual Town Meeting

All are invited to come and join as at our Annual Town Meeting on Thursday 26th March at the Community Centre, Stratton Road 7.15pm

This is an excellent opportunity to hear about what the Council has been doing and our very exciting plans for the future.

Parking at the Mount Car Park is free of charge from 7pm.

EUNICE CLIFFORD



Eunice decided to become a councillor in her later years after living in Risborough all her life, raising a family here and having a strong love and commitment for her community. She brought her down to earth, common sense, roll the sleeves up approach with her to the town council and was a wonderful contributor. After several years on the council those members who had grown closer to her tried to persuade her to have a year as mayor; she was very reluctant and took some considerable convincing that she would be able to cope with the role. The rest is history – our first lady mayor threw herself into it with passion and pride and many will remember her for the warmth and kindness that glowed from her. She championed the younger people, helping with the youth council at that time and was also the driving force in updating the play equipment in King George Park. Eunice brought something earthy, local and real to the Town Council, she was a very special lady and will be missed so much by so many.

Princes Risborough Town Council has issued this statement on COVID-19

We realise that many residents will be extremely concerned about coronavirus and the impact that it might have on services provided by the Town Council. We have been working on contingency plans to keep essential services running, even in the event that our workforce is affected by Covid-19. Please be assured that our priority is to continue providing essential services to our residents wherever possible.

We are in constant contact with local partners including neighbouring councils & NALC (National Association of Local Councils) to ensure we are fully prepared and working effectively together to keep the town running.

It has been encouraging to see residents working together to help support and protect the most vulnerable and those affected in our community. The scale of coordinating this is too great for the Town Council, so we are delighted that residents are stepping up and taking the lead.

Changes to the current plans are happening daily. At this time we still plan to hold a brief Annual Town Meeting, to meet our legal and statutory requirements, but as the situation moves on, this may yet be postponed as government plans change. The evening will not include the awards ceremony of previous years and will be brief and minimal.

At this time we continue to urge people to follow the Government advice:

- Exercise regular and thorough hand washing for a minimum of 20secs using warm water and soap, or use hand sanitiser where this is not possible.
- If experiencing a fever or new persistent cough, self-isolate for 7 days.
- If your symptoms worsen during home isolation or you are in one of the 'at risk' groups visit NHS111 online or call NHS on 111.

We will continue to provide ongoing updates on our website and social media to ensure local people have the latest information and advice about how Covid-19 is affecting the town and what they should do.

Cllr Matthew Walsh

Princes Risborough Town Council

The Princes Centre, Clifford Road, Princes Risborough, Bucks HP27 0DP

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W: www.princesrisboroughtowncouncil.gov.uk

f @Risboroughtowncouncil **t**: @Princesris **i**: princesrisboroughtc

Mayor & Chairman of the Council:	Cllr. Matthew Walsh	Deputy Chairman:	Cllr. Andy Ball
Chairman of Finance Cttee:	Cllr. Alan Turner	Chairman of Admin & HR:	Cllr. Iain McLaughlan
Chairman of Events/PR Cttee:	Cllr. Nathan Davis	Chairman of Town Cttee:	Cllr. John Coombs
Chairman of Planning Cttee:	Cllr. Nathan Davis	Chairman of Economic Regeneration Cttee:	Cllr. Ian Pearce
Chairman of Commercial Services:	Cllr. Andy Ball		

Councillors

Cllr. Lee Byrne Cllr. Gary Hall Cllr. Tapashya Murali Cllr. Stewart Baxter Cllr. David Knights

Clerk to the Council:	Mrs. Susanne Griffiths	Maintenance Team Leader:	Robert Powell
Deputy Clerk:	Mrs. Kirsty Pope	Maintenance Team Operatives:	Barney Heffernan
Administration Officer:	Jayne Mylchreest		
Bookings Officer:	Cate Holloway		

Office Hours - Monday – Friday 9.30am – 3.30pm

The full Town Council meets at 7.00pm on the last Tuesday of every month at The Princes Centre, Clifford Road. There is a 10-minute slot at the beginning of each meeting when the public can express a view or concern relating to Town matters. Please check the website to confirm time and venue.

The next meetings are: **Tuesday March 31st** **Tuesday April 28th**

The Town Council aims to be as accessible as possible, and welcomes the views, comments and concerns of the Princes Risborough electorate. Although the views of the whole Council are given wherever possible, for constitutional and legal reasons we must state that the views expressed here in Crosstalk, and in any personal correspondence received from individual Councillors, are those of the author concerned and do not necessarily express the opinions or policy of PRTC unless explicitly stated.





#MAKING IT HAPPEN

THE COUNCIL IS...



We are...

13

unpaid
Town Councillors



We have...

5

full-time equivalent
Staff Members



LOCAL COUNCIL
AWARD SCHEME
QUALITY GOLD

We are proud to have
been awarded...

Quality Gold Status for
excellence in governance,
leadership and development
**Held by only 62 out of over
10,000 Town/Parish Councils
in England & Wales**



We attended...

300

Town Council & Committee
meetings in the past five years

DID YOU KNOW...



We've changed...

530

old street lights
replaced with
LED Lanterns

*Saving £25k per annum,
65 tonnes less CO²
emissions, 146,000kwh
per annum, less net saving
of £386,000*



We've funded...

FREE

Parking

every weekend in 2020



We've awarded...

£54,735

in grants in the last five
years to local churches,
organizations &
community groups



We've protected...

our heritage by spending
£138,000

**to restore
the Market
House**



We've awarded...

£5,000

in grants to local
schools as part of the

**Democracy
Educational
Game**

KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR...



We're working on a...

£750k

Refurbishment

of our new Community Centre
including a new function
room and bar & 60 seater cafe



We have plans to...

**Refurbish
the
Basketball Court**

at St Dunstans Park



We're creating...

**A bio-diversity
Community
Garden**

at Stratton Memorial Garden



We will be installing a...

**Drinking
Fountain and
Refill Station**

in Wades Park