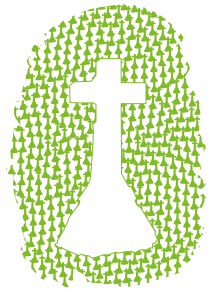




CROSS *talk*

Princes Risborough Town Council Newsletter



Photos courtesy of Iain McLaughlan



Cllr Alan Turner
Chairman & Town Mayor

A message from the Mayor

Well here we are heading for Spring, a new year and fresh challenges...

Some good news to start with, Network Rail have now confirmed that the "East West Rail" project will be happening, more or less on schedule, including the first phase of line upgrade between Aylesbury and Princes Risborough. This will mean improved connectivity for residents travelling to either Oxford or Milton Keynes. The next phase, planned for a few years time, could see the current single line become twin tracked, allowing for even more frequent services.

Town Councillors and other volunteers from the community are busy working on arrangements for the Summer Festival, as well as preparing for the Town's entry in this year's "Britain in Bloom" competition. All we need now is a nice hot summer!

As you are aware, last November the Town Council petitioned the Select Committee on HS2 at Westminster in an attempt at getting the planned construction traffic re-routed away from the Town. We had teamed up with our fellow Parish Councils in Bradenham and West Wycombe, along with Wycombe District Council and ably supported by Bucks County Council (a good example of all three tiers of Local Government working together!). We were expertly led by our "roll B agent" Jim Stevens who offered his services to the Group free of charge and did a magnificent job. His highways engineering experience was more than a match for HS2 Ltd. Jim is a Risborough resident of many years and I would like to take this opportunity to thank him for the hundreds of hours he devoted to guiding us through what was a highly technical challenge.



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Annual Town Meeting

Thursday 21st April, 7pm at the Princes Centre, Clifford Road.

ALL RESIDENTS WELCOME!

Whilst we were unable to achieve our prime aim of re-routing the traffic a deal was struck for approximately £0.5 million of road safety mitigation measures for the A4010, to be paid for by HS2 Ltd, of which almost £300,000 is specifically for Risborough.

By the time you read this article the public consultation on the draft Area Action Plan (AAP or Town Plan) will have begun. I urge all residents to visit the drop in sessions, attend the public meeting or simply view and comment on line. The Steering Group who have been working with Wycombe District Council on the draft have given their all in trying to get the greatest positive outcome possible; to say it has been a challenging process would be the understatement of the century. The AAP may not be perfect, but it is the best we were able to achieve in very difficult circumstances. With determined developers circling Risborough our choice is very simple - planned development through the AAP with improved infrastructure or speculative development outside of our control. The Town faces its biggest challenge in a generation, but I do believe that as a community we will come out of it stronger than ever. Whatever the outcome we have to make it work, for the sake of future generations.

Cllr Alan Turner - Chairman

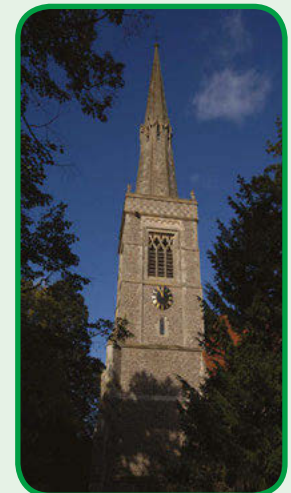
2000 - 2500 New Homes for Risborough?

Time is running out to have your say about the Draft Town Plan for Princes Risborough

The plan shows where 2000 – 2500 new homes could be built and how new roads, schools, public transport, open spaces and sports facilities could be put in place to balance the growth. If you missed the drop in exhibitions and public meetings, all the contents are available online at www.wycombe.gov.uk/newlocalplan on the Princes Risborough tab and as a hard copy at Princes Risborough library, Princes Risborough Town Council and Wycombe District Council offices.

You can give informed comment up until Easter Monday (28 March). The draft Princes Risborough Town Plan is also available online. You can fill in a survey form at www.wycombe.gov.uk/haveyoursay or comment by email or post by downloading a feedback form from the website.

Cllr Alan Turner, Chairman of Princes Risborough Town Council said: "Like everyone who lives here, I care deeply about this town. Right now in Princes Risborough there are applications for around 1500 new homes. We need the town plan in place to fight off speculative piecemeal development like this which would bring new homes without the right infrastructure to support the expansion. If you haven't already done it, please look at the plans put in your comments –and help us to get the best result we can for Risborough".





Town Report

Spring and Summer Bedding

As is usual around this time of year our thoughts have been towards ensuring that the town will look at its best during the spring and summer with grass being mowed on a regular basis and the flower beds that have been left fallow over the winter take on some colour with the planting of spring flowers. To this end we have sought quotes and are in the process of finalising the contracts. The colour scheme that we intend for the summer bedding this year will be red, white and blue to commemorate the 90th birthday of Her Majesty the Queen and this will also be reflected in the bunting that has been proposed for this year's festival.



It has been decided that in the boxes below the Town entry signs, on the A4010, and in a new bed, to be prepared and maintained by the local scout group along Mill Lane, we should trial the introduction of wild flowers as they made such a wonderful sight in other towns around the area in past years. We have sought advice from other councils who have used wild flower beds in the past and are now able to source seeds that will flower for a much longer time.



Trees

Following a joint exercise with Wycombe District Council (WDC), we are pleased to confirm that over 60 trees have recently been planted in and around our town. This project was taken on by our Town Council tree working group, and with the expertise of WDC, we were able to identify various locations in our town that we considered suitable sites. We would like to thank WDC for funding this wonderful project for our town.

Clean up

Only recently we have received confirmation from Bucks County Council that in close cooperation with the Town Council and the Chiltern Society, it is intended to 'clean up' the footpath that runs between the gardens in Berryfield Road and those in Woodfield Road and alongside the Crescent recreation ground. This footpath has been an eyesore for a long time and it will be to the delight of many townsfolk that at last this dumping ground for old settees, bricks and even drug paraphernalia will be tidied up.

Lighting

The Lighting Working Group have recently reported to council members with regards to the LED street lighting project. Cllr Walsh & Cllr Hall have now identified 10 lights within the town that should be replaced with this new light to gauge their effectiveness and reduction in power consumption. In addition, it was agreed that a rolling replacement programme will be set-up in line with the agreed LED budget.

Should you have any comments, good or bad, about anything that this committee has under its responsibility, then please let us know through the usual channels, full contact information can be found on the back of this newsletter.



Cllr John Coombs - Chairman of Town Committee





Princes Risborough Town Council Art in the Park 2016

Princes Risborough Town Council invites you to participate in...

Art in the Park 2016 Competition

We are looking for local artists to get involved and to be part of our Festival 2016 celebrations. Art in any media will be considered.

If you are interested, please contact the Town Council office.

T: 01844 275912 **E:** towncouncil@princesrisborough.com



Artwork
displayed in
Wades Park!

Submission
deadline
May 1st 2016!

Free to
enter!

Prizes to be
awarded at the
Town Festival on
Saturday 9th July!



1st Prize
Collector Edition print
by Quentin Blake
(worth over £150)

Kindly Sponsored by

Risborough GALLERY

Fine art and Framing for over 30 years



Save the Date 9th July!

The beginning of 2016 has seen us here at the Town Council resume responsibility for organizing the Summer Festival and Christmas Lights Switch on. In anticipation of these additional activities we have rearranged our Committee structure culminating in the creation of an Events Committee. In addition to merging in the Festival Committee's responsibilities we have brought our **Art in the Park** and **Risborough in Bloom** events into the committee's sphere. We are always keen to have people with an interest in some of the above events to join us please if you are interested contact the office - it would be a pleasure to welcome you!

As you are aware there continues to be pressure on local Government finances and the Town Council is no exception. We have already agreed our budgets and like all areas we have been tasked with finding savings. So we are having to think out of the box with regards to new ideas and generating sponsorship but we believe with the support of local businesses and our residents we will deliver a great event.

I would also like to add my thanks to all of the people who have run the Festival previously. It is a huge job that requires dedication and perseverance and all of these events are supported by people that give their time and energy for free. With the huge pressures we all face with our limited free time they have been a credit to this town's residents and visitors.

We are planning on focusing on the Street Fair this year, bringing our Community together on the High Street, supporting our retailers and showcasing the best of Risborough.

With Her Majesty celebrating her 90th Birthday this year we decided to recognise this through the Festival **"90 Years – Celebrating the Best of Britain"**. So whether you have fond memories of the 1960's or a burning ambition to dig out the neon pink and green Lycra from the 1980's we hope the Festival will provide something for all. In addition to the High Street Festivities we will be launching the **Risborough Bake Off**, including a Junior Version, so submit some entries and you can finally put to rest who is your family's master baker! If you want to get involved please contact kirsty@princesrisborough.com

Cllr Matthew Walsh - Chairman of Events Committee

www.risboroughfestival.co.uk

Princes Risborough Town Council is currently looking to recruit an Apprentice to assist our Maintenance Team.

You will help to deliver all the maintenance requirements of the council, both internal and external, along with gardening and grass cutting responsibilities.

All necessary training will be provided, including day release at Berkshire College of Agriculture. Successful applicants will need to undergo a DBS check.

Contact the Town Council office today for further information.





The Britain in Bloom competition fast approaches and we aim to build on our success of last year, our first, having taken on board the remarks made by the judges. The judging will take place early July and we are setting up a task force to clean and tidy in advance of that date and in collaboration of the Clean for the Queen event. If you would like to get involved in helping us to improve on our success, then please get in touch with the office in the usual way.

A fun-filled and factual, number-based look at the town in which we live.....

1523 – The right to hold a weekly market in Risborough was granted by King Henry VIII in 1523.

1086 – At the time of the Domesday Survey in 1086, Risborough was a royal manor held by the king. The manor had land for 24 ploughs 2 mills, and was home to 30 villagers, 1000 pigs and 3 slaves.

2 – The number of slaves that I currently own. Sorry, not slaves - children.

770 – The parish lies on the north-western slope of the Chiltern Hills, rising to over 770 ft. above the Ordnance datum.

17 – The Market House, the focal point of the town, was built in the 17th century. The upper floor was used as the Council Chambers by the Town Council until as recently as 2001.

64 – The average number of times per week I get asked as a Town Councillor, “What is happening to the old post office?”

1970 – Risborough Rangers football club was founded.

7 – The number of pubs in the civil parish. All of them are well worth a visit if you haven’t already done so.

0 – The number of free pints I got given for the writing the above fact. (So far)

45,000 – The number of Red Kites that populate the Risborough area; outnumbering their human counterparts by 5:1.

1910 – The year the famous Kop Hill Climb was established. It now attracts around 11,500 spectators annually.

13 – The number of current Risborough Town Councillors. Please do give any of us a shout if there is something you would like raised.

1 – The one way system was introduced to the high street in 2009.

1862 – It first became possible to travel from Princes Risborough to London on the train. At that date the journey to London took about 2 hours and 40 minutes. (Some may argue it still does at times.)

300 – In 479 BC, 300 brave Risborough residents took on an army of over 300,000 Persian soldiers. Princes Risborough is served primarily by the 300 bus service.

37 – The total number of recipients of the Citizen Award so far, which started in 1997, and honours and acknowledges an individual’s outstanding contribution in the community.

100 – The above may not be 100% accurate, but most of it is!

Cllr Kyle Wilkins





Devolved Services

It's that time of the year when we start to look at the grass in our gardens and begin to contemplate when we will undertake our first cut.

We retreat to the shed to look at the condition of the mower, decide if the strimmer needs more wire and ponder when did we last get the blades sharpened? We too have been asking these questions, though our discussions began long before we even completed our last cut here at the Town Council. All of our equipment has been serviced and we have made additional purchases to help the Maintenance team function as efficiently as possible.

I would like to thank the all of the Maintenance Team for their sterling job last year. To take on all of the additional responsibilities whilst maintaining our parks and flower beds to such a high standard is a huge achievement. Last year we achieved seven cuts for Risborough across the grass cutting season and we hope to manage the same this year too.

If you recall from my previous articles, the funding we receive for grass cutting has been cut this year by half. In effect from this year the County Council are only providing funding for three cuts, so we are having to use our own resources to deliver the majority of the work this year. We had a huge response to our Crosstalk survey highlighting the overwhelming majority of residents who support an increase in the precept to help pay for grass cutting. This year we managed to freeze the precept again, which in comparison to the County Council rise of 3.99% and the District at 3.71% we feel is a real achievement.

With regards to the Devolved Services Budgets the fact that our Parish partners have renewed their contracts has helped with the financial picture. Taking on Devolved Services for the District Council has also boosted our income levels. We have also formed a group to look into tendering for external work across the area for 2017/18. We are also trialling wild flowers in parts of the town this summer which require less watering at our peak of summer work. I look forward to writing to you later in the year with an update on how we are getting on; if you have any ideas or comments please to do not hesitate to get in touch, we always value your feedback.



Cllr Matthew Walsh

Parking Review Update

To tell the honest truth since my last parking review update in last November's Crosstalk there haven't been any further meetings or discussions as Bucks County Council (BCC) suspended their plans due to financial constraints at the end of 2015.

From what I have been told at the joint meetings that Cllr Alan Turner and I have attended, the review will be getting back on track at the beginning of the new financial year (April 2016), this will be followed by a formal public consultation on the final outputs from our town parking review. With regards to the funding of this review, Wycombe District Council are looking to help out with 106 developer monies.

During this consultation period, this will be the time that you, our town residents, will be asked to give feedback to your elected Town Councillors and representatives from BCC. All being well the final agreed parking review will be implemented during the middle months of this year. If any residents have any issues or questions regarding this parking review then please feel free to phone or email me direct.



Cllr Andy Ball



Town Council Freezes Council Tax

During October and November last year all the committees of the Town Council met to discuss the budgets for the forthcoming year. Later in December the Town Council met to agree the budgets for 2016/7. The good news is that for the **seventh** year running we have managed to freeze the precept (the Town Council's share of the Council Tax). All this with the back drop of increases by Wycombe District Council (3.71%) and Bucks County Council (3.99%). In common with other Councils all our costs are increasing and we have had to examine all possibilities for cost savings without impacting the services the Town Council provide to the town, services you expect and rely upon.

Last year you may remember we urged residents to take part in a survey asking if you would support an increase to the precept. We had an amazing response and this helped us during our discussions. We were very reluctant to increase the precept and this was viewed as a very last resort. Thankfully with long and hard work we managed to find the savings in the budgets enabling us to freeze the precept for the forthcoming year.

With all the challenges the Town Council face we will need careful financial management over the coming year to ensure we can provide the services, you our residents, have come to depend upon.



Cllr Iain McLauchlan - Chairman of Finance Committee

Princes Risborough Town Council

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

T: 01844 275912 E: towncouncil@princesrisborough.com

Please visit our website: www.princesrisborough.com : @Princesris

Mayor & Chairman of the Council:	Cllr. Alan Turner
Vice Chairman:	Cllr. Wally Woolf
Chairman of Finance Cttee:	Cllr. Iain McLauchlan
Chairman of Admin & HR Cttee:	Cllr. Andy Ball
Chairman of Events Cttee:	Cllr. Matthew Walsh
Chairman of Town Cttee:	Cllr. John Coombs
Chairman of Planning Cttee:	Cllr. Mags West
Chairman of Public Relations Cttee:	Cllr. John Coombs

Councillors

Cllr. Ian Churchill	Cllr. Gary Hall	Cllr. Adrian Rolfe	Cllr. Pam Summerbell
Cllr. Dawn Roper			Cllr. Kyle Wilkins

Clerk to the Council:	Mrs. Susanne Griffiths
Deputy Clerk:	Mrs. Kirsty Pope
Clerical Assistants:	Mrs. Caroline Page and Mrs. Jayne Mylchreest
Maintenance Team Operatives:	Mr. Lee Fortnam, Mr. Kevin Locke & Mr. Reece Harwood

Office Hours

Monday – Friday 10.00am – 3.00pm

The full Town Council meets at 7.00pm bi-monthly 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 meeting is **Tuesday 29th March 2016**

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.