



www.newromney-tc.gov.uk



town.clerk@newromney-tc.gov.uk



INTRODUCTION FROM THE TOWN MAYOR 2023-24

Over the past year, the Mayoress and I have been deeply honoured to serve our town, embracing every opportunity to connect with residents and guests, including from our neighboring Cinque Ports. Together, we've dedicated ourselves to supporting local charities, businesses, and events, fostering a sense of unity and community spirit. Highlights of our tenure include the uplifting celebration of International Women's Day, with a memorable Ladies Night hosted by the Mayoress, and my own efforts in organising two enlightening 'Behind the Scenes' events at the Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch Railway. These occasions not only showcased the beauty of our

town but also attracted dignitaries from far and wide, offering them a firsthand glimpse into the heart of our community. As we reflect on the past year, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to all who have joined us on this journey, and we look forward to continuing to serve, in whatever form that might take, in the days ahead.

Cllr John Rivers

The Right Worshipful the Mayor of New Romney & Chairman of New Romney Town Council 2023-24

TOWN COUNCIL SUCCESS STORIES

2023-2024 has, once again, been a very busy and productive year for New Romney Town Council. Like previous years, the Council has been pleased to support a number of community initiatives and events and further improvements to the locality have been undertaken for the benefit of residents. In addition to this, following an immense amount of work, the Town Council has now reached the momentous stage in the delivery of the 'Maude Community Centre' and annex when, in February 2024, it was able to award the Design and Build contract for this project to Kent Structures Ltd.

There are also a number of other successes that have been achieved during the course of the civic year that are definitely worthy of highlighting within this report:

Strategic Plan 2023-2027

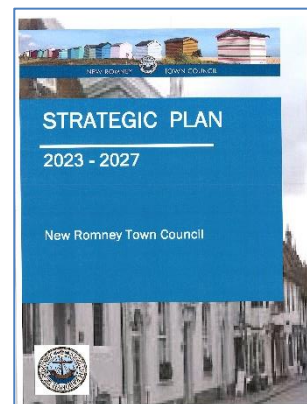
New Romney Town Council has developed and adopted its first ever Strategic Plan.

The Strategic Plan 2023-2027 describes the Council's vision for the current four-year term of office, what it is trying to achieve and what its key objectives and priorities are between now and May 2027.

This new initiative for the Town Council, is the result of a focussed workshop involving Council Members, who were able to share their ideas for the Council's priorities based on their understanding of what local residents want, need or are concerned about – understanding gleaned from direct conversations and communications as well as local social media posts.

The Strategic Plan explains clearly to Councillors, staff, residents, businesses and other local organisations exactly what the Council aims to achieve for the benefit of the Town and its residents between now and the next election. New Romney Town Council is an ambitious Council and its Members are all committed to helping make the Town of New Romney, which includes Littlestone and Greatstone, a better place to live, work and visit. This document will help the Council continue to focus on delivering excellent, value for money services for the Town and its residents.

New Romney Town Council's Strategic Plan 2023-2027 has been published and is available to view on its website.



Partnership Working



The Town Council has, this past year, been delighted to enter into a volunteering arrangement with New Romney in Bloom. This local community group works extremely hard to bring added colour and beauty to the parish of New Romney and to assist with keeping the Parish looking attractive and tidy for residents and visitors alike. The NRIB Volunteers very kindly planted out the St. Martin's Field planters in time for the Coronation Celebrations in the early part of 2023. They have recently taken

on the challenge of improving the flowerbeds at the Princess Diana Memorial Garden in Littlestone Road (aka Flagstaff Land) and have been busy preparing the beds for planting. The Council is sure that it won't be too long at all before the fruits of all their hard work will be evident and enjoyed by everyone who passes by or rests a while in this delightful garden.

Supporting Improved Local Health & Wellbeing

The New Romney Town Council Health and Wellbeing Committee plays a crucial role in supporting the health and welfare of the local community. By focusing on various aspects such as New Romney NHS provision, local health and wellbeing needs, and issues pertaining to the Integrated Health Board, the committee strives to address the diverse health challenges faced by residents. Through collaboration between Councillors, health professionals, and representatives from Patient Participation Groups, the committee endeavors to identify gaps in healthcare provision, advocate for improved services, and promote initiatives that enhance the overall wellbeing of individuals within the community. With a proactive approach to healthcare governance, the committee aims to foster a healthier and more resilient community, where individuals have access to quality healthcare services tailored to their specific needs. In essence, the work of the committee is integral to safeguarding the health and prosperity of New Romney's residents, ensuring that they receive the care and support necessary to lead fulfilling lives.

Dementia Friendly Council

In September 2019, the Council resolved to “**become a Dementia Friendly Council**”.

The Council resolved that (i) all New Romney Town Council Members shall undertake Dementia-Friendly Training and that (ii) New Romney Town Council shall take steps to become a Dementia Friendly Council.

Many Councillors received the initial training and it has now been scheduled to be repeated in June 2024 so that all Councillors can receive or refresh their training and the current Council can continue to develop as a ‘Dementia Friendly’ Council. Cllrs Rivers and Thomas continue to sit on the Romney Marsh Dementia Forum.

Work has progressed on adapting Town Council buildings (Town Hall and Assembly Rooms) to make them more dementia friendly. The lighting in the Assembly Rooms and in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall has now been replaced with improved LED lighting, reducing areas of shadow and, thereby, assisting to reduce confusion for dementia sufferers. The provision of signage for the Town Hall and in the Assembly Rooms to assist dementia sufferers is currently in hand.



Climate Emergency



As previously reported, New Romney Town Council resolved to declare “**a Climate Change and Ecological Emergency, with the aim of making its activities nett carbon neutral by 2030**”.

The Town Council was the first in Kent to complete the Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) Carbon Footprint Calculator and identify potential areas for improvement.

The Council has subsequently continued to move steadily towards becoming paper-free – with the vast majority of Town Council communications now being dealt with entirely electronically and the use of paper in respect of routine Council business and transactions significantly reduced.

Most recently, the Town Council approved quotations to replace Town Hall waste receptacles and to upgrade its waste collection subscription to accommodate the recycling of Town Hall waste. In addition to this, lighting in the Assembly Rooms and in the Council Chamber has now been replaced with low energy LED lighting and electricity supply meters have been upgraded to smart meters.



Where possible, appropriate and practical, meetings other than Full Council and Committee meetings continue to be held remotely to reduce the Council's carbon emissions due to travel (eg working party meetings / meetings with outside bodies or other third parties).

The Town Council Office now officially operates a four-day week, since all staff are part-time employees and the closure of the Town Hall for one additional day per week has enabled energy saving as well as cost saving. It should be noted, however, that, despite the move to operating an official four-day week, public accessibility to Council services via the Town Hall offices has, in fact, increased from three mornings per week to four mornings per week.

Accessibility

The Council has continued working on exploring and improving the issues of accessibility at the Town Hall and Assembly Rooms, having assessed the recommendations of relevant Access Audits commissioned by the Town Council.

A number of small accessibility improvements were actioned early on, including the installation of doorbells at the Town Hall and the Assembly Rooms to call for assistance in gaining access and adaptations to the rear threshold at the Assembly Rooms to allow improved access for wheelchair users. Continuation of this work has subsequently been incorporated into the Town Council's recently adopted Strategic Plan for 2023-2027 and, most recently, the replacement of the Town Hall stair lift has been completed, providing greatly improved access to the Council Chamber with a stair lift that can now also accommodate wheelchair users.

The Council has been holding all Town Council meetings in the Assembly Rooms during the past two years due to the unreliability of the chair-lift access to the Council Chamber. However, it is now possible to return Council Meetings to the Council Chamber at the Town Hall. In light of this, the Council is currently exploring replacement of the existing large meeting tables and chairs to improve ease of movement around the Council Chamber for Councillors, staff and visitors alike.

Parish Highway Improvement Plan

New Romney Town Council is pleased to report that, with assistance from Kent County Council, it has developed a **Parish Highway Improvement Plan for New Romney.**

The aim of the Parish Highway Improvement Plan is to look at all of the **Road Safety** issues we have in New Romney, Littlestone & Greatstone and develop a coordinated plan of improvements to address identified road safety shortfalls.

This allows us to identify and prioritise road safety improvements such as:

- Reduce Speed Limits
- Parking Restrictions
- Speed Monitoring
- Road Layout
- Signage
- And much more



Following a series of public engagement events, the Highways Improvement Plan has now been approved and published on the Town Council website.

In order to commence implementation of the PHIP (Parish Highway Improvement Plan), New Romney Town Council (NRTC) has had four meetings with Kent County Council (KCC) in the last 12 months. The most recent was regarding the outcome of 9 x traffic surveys and 1 pedestrian survey to cover Zones 1 & 2 of our Highway Improvement Plan. All areas surveyed were deemed suitable for a 20MPH limit and Brissenden Close & Richmond Drive have also been added into the 20MPH zones.

There are concerns over the speeds in Cockreed Lane being too high to implement the 20MPH limit and other options are being investigated but it still may be possible to place a 20MPH speed limit.

Kent County Council have communicated an Extents Plan outlining our proposed changes – a public engagement meeting was held in February 2024 at the Assembly Rooms, attended by over 40 residents.

KCC have installed the new Church Approach one-way signage; we have also requested that the white Lines for Ashford Road junction onto the High Street are repainted (KCC Reference 754211).

Just a reminder that we have received the 30 MPH toolkit from Kent County Council which consists of banners and stickers that residents are welcome to collect from the Town Hall to display at their properties or place the stickers on their bins to remind others of the speed limit within their roads/streets. These self-adhesive stickers/signs are a great way of raising awareness of speed limits in residential and built-up areas within our Parish and we would encourage all residents to use them on their bins/properties in a 30 MPH zone.

“Not suitable for HGV vehicles” signage has been ordered for Spitalfield Lane & Sussex Road. The size and location of these new signs has also been agreed with KCC.

One of the key areas of concern for residents highlighted during our 7 public engagement meetings was congestion within the High Street caused by problem parking and bottle necks.

After discussions with both Kent County Council and Folkestone and Hythe District Council a plan has been developed to rearrange the parking within the High Street to allow for better free flow of traffic which will avoid congestion, by preventing parking on one side of the whole length of the High Street from The Ship Hotel to the Cinque Ports pub. Additional parking will be created on the opposite side of the High Street. The changes suggested will only lose 2 parking spaces in total to the High Street and gain an additional disabled parking bay. This strategy was agreed at the Joint Transportation Board meeting between KCC and FHDC in November 2023.

Please see the suggested changes via the New Romney Town Council’s website using this link:

<http://www.newromneytc.gov.uk/UserFiles/Files/Parish%20Highway/High%20Street%20Parking%20Change.pdf>

The Highway Improvement Plan and all associated documents are available to view on New Romney Town Council’s Website. The Highway Improvement Plan document highlights New Romney Town Council’s identified priorities and KCC’s comments regarding actions that will be required to be undertaken by Kent County Council or New Romney Town Council to implement the Plan. To view the Highway Improvement Plan for New Romney, please use this link:

http://www.newromneytc.gov.uk/Parish_Highway_Improvement_Plan_41431.aspx

IMPROVEMENTS TO THE LOCALITY

St. Martin’s Field



During 2023, New Romney Town Council completed its ‘Queen’s Green Canopy’ project with the installation of a Platinum Jubilee Commemorative Tree Bench.

The Council also installed a commemorative bench on St. Martin’s Field to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III.

With the generous assistance of New Romney in Bloom work is on-going with developing the pollinator-friendly flower-bed on St. Martin’s Field.

The Greens, Littlestone / Fairfield Road Recreation Ground / St. Martin’s Field

The Parish Caretaking team has been busy over the recent months replacing ageing litter bins at the Greens as well as Fairfield Road Recreation Ground and St. Martin’s Field - and this programme of work has now been completed.

The new bins are equipped with vermin flaps to assist in reducing access by seagulls in particular - and will be helping to keep New Romney free of litter.



Princess Diana Memorial Garden (Flagstaff Land)



The installation of new bollards around the boundary of the Princess Diana Memorial Garden has now been completed. The new boundary bollards certainly help to bring a new lease of life to the garden, whilst also protecting the area from unauthorised incursions. Following deterioration of the flagstaff, this was recently removed and a replacement purchased. Installation of the replacement flagstaff is currently in hand.



New Romney in Bloom has been working very hard to prepare the flowerbeds for spring/summer planting and its volunteers will be continuing to give up their time throughout the coming year to transform the rockery beds and bring some much-needed additional colour to the area.

Town Trail Installation Completed



Following the winding up of 5th Continent, New Romney Town Council took receipt of a number of plaques which form a New Romney Town Trail as well as two town maps. The Town Trail plaques have now all been installed by the Council's Parish Caretaker around New Romney and Littlestone and the two town maps have also been installed in West Street Car Park and Church Approach. Visitors to the Town as well as residents will now be able to make the most of the approaching better weather to enjoy learning a little more about our local history.

Supporting Improved Local Biodiversity

The Tree Nursery that was developed adjacent the Allotment Gardens in Church Road by the 1st New Romney Scout Group, working in partnership with New Romney Town Council, is doing well and the saplings are continuing to grow steadily stronger. It is envisaged that once the saplings are adequately established, they can be distributed for re-planting within the parish.

This year, New Romney Town Council gave consent for the installation of a number of beehives at its land in Church Road. The beehives are looked after by Marsh Apiaries and the Town Council is delighted to support this work to increase the presence of these important pollinators on Romney Marsh.



New Romney in Bloom's volunteers have commenced work on numerous areas of Town Council land to tidy up borders and flowerbeds and bring some additional colour to the Town – whilst also assisting in increasing pollinator-friendly planting where appropriate. The Town Council is very grateful for their generous support in looking after our Town.

IMPROVING LOCAL LEISURE FACILITIES AND BUILDING COMMUNITY SPIRIT

In February 2024, New Romney Town Council confirmed the exciting news that, having been awarded planning consent in December 2023 for its new, budget-led project and following a stringent tendering process, it had awarded a Design and Build Construction Contract for the newly-named 'Maude Community Centre' and Annexe, which is to be sited adjacent to the Station Road Sports Ground.



In February 2022, the Council had taken the decision to halt the original project and to re-design it, to be delivered within a fixed budget. In January 2023, the Town Council agreed to move forward with a revised, fully costed design that could be achieved within the available budget. Further engagement then took place with key stakeholders to refine the project design.

In September 2023, a new project planning application was submitted to Folkestone and Hythe District Council and the contract opportunity was publicised. The deadline for receipt of tenders was 11th December 2023 and on 12th December 2023, the new project design was awarded planning consent – which was excellent news!

On 7th February 2024, having completed a stringent tender review and interview process, which was supported by Synergy Construction & Property Consultants, the Town Council formally awarded the £3.3 million contract to deliver the project – which has now been named the 'Maude Community Centre' – to Kent Structures Ltd.

New Romney Town Council is delighted to have been able to award this exciting contract opportunity to a local company, Kent Structures Ltd, which is located in Ashford - thus aligning the Council's decision with its ethos of supporting local economy whenever possible.

Work will commence on site on 29th April 2024 and is due to be completed by 28th April 2025. The new Maude Community Centre, once officially opened, will provide a main two-storey building and a single-storey annexe. These new facilities will be home to a wide range of much-valued community services, including a community sports pavilion which will become the new home of New Romney's local sports teams, a 150-seat community hall available for hire by local groups and organisations, as well as private hire for family parties, wedding receptions and other family functions and for community events, business conferences etc, and facilities for daily childcare provision.

Delighted by New Romney Town Council's decision to now see this project through to fruition, Chairman of the Project Steering Group, Councillor Paul Thomas, stated: *'The Project Steering Group has worked hard over the last two years, in a difficult financial environment, to work with key stakeholders on finalising a deliverable design which has now received planning consent. I look forward to the opening of the Maude Community Centre and Annexe in April 2025, which will transform the existing site and I am delighted that we have retained the Maude name.'*



The Right Worshipful the Mayor of New Romney, Councillor John Rivers added: *'This project will prove to be an important step forward for our community and shows that the Town Council takes seriously its responsibilities as our population grows and as the demands on leisure spaces increases. Important for mental and physical health, this brand new, modern facility will promote healthy living and social benefits for all. I look forward to the provision of these facilities in the second quarter of 2025.'*

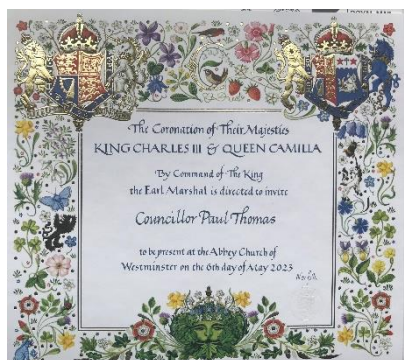
MAINTAINING NEW ROMNEY'S HISTORIC LINKS

My experience representing New Romney at the Coronation of King Charles III

by Cllr Paul Thomas.

In April 2023, we received a communication from the Registrar and Senechal of the Cinque Ports.

"I am pleased to inform you that the claim of the Barons of the Cinque Ports to their historic "Honours at Court" has been allowed to the extent of allocating 14 seats at the Coronation. I understand that this will allow attendance at the ceremony in Westminster Abbey but will not include the performance of any specific duties, such as the Barons have undertaken in the past. Formal written invitations will follow and further information, including precise timings, dress code and entry arrangements will be issued nearer the date.



In the absence of the Lord Warden and in accordance with instructions given by the General Brotherhood of the Cinque Ports in 1812, the Speaker has determined that one seat should be allocated to each of the 14 member towns of the Confederation. In accordance with ancient tradition, the Speaker has issued a formal written "precept".

This was followed with an official invitation to the Coronation from Buckingham Palace.

On Saturday 6th May 2023, King Charles III was crowned, in the sight of God and his people. As a Baron of the Cinque Ports, I represented New Romney at his Coronation Ceremony; it was a very humbling experience and one I will never forget.

The back story of how New Romney became a Cinque Port and how the Mayor gained the title of Honorary Baron is an interesting one. It all started in 1041, when Edward the Confessor set out his requirement to the south coast Portsmen to use 20 of their ships, each with a crew of 21, for 15 days of service annually. William the Conqueror's Charter (written then in old French), coined the term "Cinque Ports" as at that time there were only five recognised ports and William's requirement was for the annual provision of 57 ships for 15 days.

Cinque Port Barons were first invited to coronations by King Richard I (known as the Lionheart) Coronation on the 3 September 1189 as King of England. Richard's coronation ceremony was remarkable as it was the start of contemporary accounts being recorded.



For almost a thousand years, Westminster Abbey, with the Shrine of St Edward, King and Confessor, at its heart, has remained the place of coronation for our monarchs. The Cinque Port Barons, by tradition, carried the canopy over the monarch as he or she walked to and from the coronation. Afterwards, the Barons normally shared the canopy and New Romney has a section of the canopy from George II in a display case in the Town Hall.



GRANT FUNDING SUPPORT

During 2023-24, New Romney Town Council has awarded grant funding as follows:

| | | |
|-------------------------------|---|-----------|
| St. Martin's Field Charity | - | £2,000.00 |
| New Romney in Bloom | - | £ 684.00 |
| Light Up New Romney | - | £1,116.00 |
| Teach Me (Enhanced Education) | - | £3,000.00 |
| JAM on the Marsh | | £1,200.00 |

COMMUNITY EVENTS

During 2023-2024, New Romney Town Council hosted several community events:

KING CHARLES III CORONATION CELEBRATIONS – BIG CORONATION PICNIC



New Romney Town Council was delighted to organise and host a community picnic on St. Martin's Field to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III. The picnic event, which provided attendees with a programme of free live music, entertainment and activities for all ages throughout the afternoon, was a great success. It was fantastic to see St. Martin's Field so full with

local residents enjoying themselves in the sunshine together with their families and friends, and to feel the real sense of community that this event had helped to create whilst celebrating this important occasion.



ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CONCERT

In December 2023, the Council also provided the annual free community Christmas Concert in the Parish Church, which was, this year, performed by Hythe Town Concert Band. It was, once again, a very well attended event and the many positive comments received confirmed that those who attended enjoyed a fabulous evening of festive music, which provided a lovely way to head into the Christmas season.



OTHER EVENTS IN THE COMMUNITY

New Romney Town Council supported a number of Community events – whether financially or in kind, including:

New Romney Country Fayre

Light Up New Romney Lantern Parade

RBL New Romney Remembrance Day Service

JAM on the Marsh Festival



THE GREENS, LITTLESTONE

The Greens, Littlestone, is an area of informal, open space which is owned and maintained by the Town Council. Whilst it is predominantly used for community recreational activity, it is also made available for a range of community events and activities, including funfairs, fun runs and similar. Some of these events and activities benefit local organisations or charities by providing them with opportunities for fund-raising, whilst others provide entertainment for local residents.

During 2023-24, the following events took place at The Greens:

- Weekly Market
-

ST. MARTIN'S FIELD, NEW ROMNEY

St. Martin's Field, New Romney, is a more formal area of open space which is owned and maintained by the Town Council and managed by St. Martin's Field Charity and predominantly used for community recreational activity. It is also made available for a range of community events and activities, including funfairs, fun runs and similar. Like events at The Greens, Littlestone, some of these events and activities benefit local organisations or charities by providing them with opportunities for fund-raising, whilst others provide entertainment for local residents.



During 2023-24, the following events took place at St. Martin's Field:

- King Charles III Coronation Celebrations – Big Coronation Picnic
 - June Funfair
 - Romney Marsh Rotary Club 10K Run
 - New Romney Country Fayre
 - Minis Rochford Hundred RFC Rugby Day
-

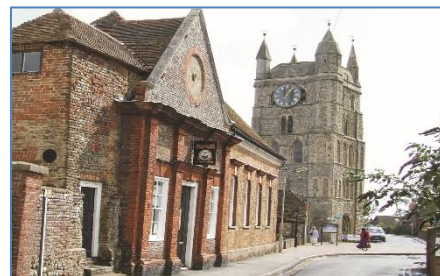
ASSEMBLY ROOMS, NEW ROMNEY

The Assembly Rooms in Church Approach, New Romney, are let on a regular basis to a range of local groups and organisations as well as for use by private persons.

For booking enquiries or further information, please go to the Town Council website: www.newromney-tc.gov.uk

or contact the Facilities and Communications Clerk at the Town Hall.

Email: fc.clerk@newromney-tc.gov.uk Tel: 01797 362348



CHURCH LANE ALLOTMENTS



The Town Council is responsible for Church Lane Allotment Gardens and is pleased to report that whilst there currently remains only a short waiting list for plots, the take-up by new tenants as plots become vacant continues to be steady.

The routine plot inspection process undertaken during the 2023 growing season once again evidenced how much pride Tenants have taken in their work and the Allotment Gardens are continuing to look really lovely!

The beehives are well tended by the resident bee-keeper and the mixture of produce combined with pollinator-friendly flowers being grown by our allotment gardeners is assisting in supporting local biodiversity.



If you are interested in renting an allotment garden plot or for further information, please go to the Town Council Website: www.newromney-tc.gov.uk or contact the Facilities & Communications Clerk at the Town Hall.

Email: fc.clerk@newromney-tc.gov.uk Tel: 01797 362348



COUNCILLOR SURGERIES:

Regular Monthly Surgeries are held for the Town and Coast Wards of New Romney, at which residents can meet Members of the Town Council and Community Warden for New Romney and, by appointment, the MP for the Romney Marsh, to discuss any issues that they may wish to raise.

In addition to this, Kent Police hold Police Surgeries at the Town Hall; no appointment necessary.

Town Ward and Coast Ward:

The Assembly Rooms, Church Approach, New Romney

MP, Town and District Councillor Surgery – First Friday in every Calendar Month (except August)

Town Hall, High Street, New Romney

Kent Police PCSO surgery – dates as per published poster

REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

New Romney Town Council appoints Members as representatives to other organisations. The Town Council would like to thank those Members who have, during 2023-24, served as Representatives on Outside Bodies, as follows:

| Organisation | Town Council Representative 2023-24 |
|---|---|
| Steward for Damian Collins MP | Cllr L Glover , Cllr P Coe (Res) |
| Town / Coast Ward Councillor Surgery Attendants | Cllr K Terry, Cllr A Meredith, Cllr W D Wimble |
| Emergency Contacts for Shepway District Council | Town Mayor – Cllr J Rivers Deputy Mayor – Cllr P Coe |
| Floodline Contacts for Environment Agency | Cllr P Thomas, Cllr J Rivers, Cllr J Hiscock, Cllr P Carey |
| Kent Association of Local Councils | Cllr J Rivers, Cllr K Terry |
| Lydd Airport Consultative Committee | Cllr P Coe, Cllr J Davies |
| Dungeness Site Stakeholder Group | Cllr P Coe, Cllr W D Wimble, Cllr A Meredith |
| NHS / South Kent Coast Clinical Commissioning Group | Cllr J Rivers, Cllr J Hiscock |
| Southlands Almshouse Trust | Cllr P J Coe |
| Confederation of Cinque Ports | Town Mayor – Cllr J Rivers, Town Clerk – Mrs C Newcombe Cinque Ports Champion - Cllr Rev Cn S McLachlan |
| Romney Marshes Area Internal Drainage Board | Cllr P Coe, Cllr J Hiscock |
| Environment Agency | Cllr P Coe, Cllr J Hiscock |
| New Romney Allotment Association | Cllr J Hiscock, Cllr A Meredith |
| New Romney Coastal Community Team | Town Mayor – Cllr J Rivers, Cllr Rev Cn S McLachlan |
| Romney Marsh Forum | Cllr J Hiscock, Cllr W D Wimble |
| New Romney in Bloom | Cllr Rev Cn McLachlan |
| Mayoral Representative | No permanent representative – appointed as and when required at the discretion of the Mayor |

COUNCILLOR DETAILS

New Romney Town Council consists of a full membership of sixteen Councillors, with eight Members representing each of its two Wards.

In **2023-24**, the Membership of New Romney Town Council was as follows:

Town Ward:

The Right Worshipful the Mayor of New Romney, Councillor J Rivers

Councillor W D Wimble

Councillor L Phillips

Councillor J Houston

Councillor Rev Cn S McLachlan

Councillor J Davies

Councillor P Carey

Councillor S Hodges

Coast Ward:

Councillor P Thomas

Councillor J M Hiscock

Councillor L Glover

Councillor S O'Hare

Councillor A Meredith

Councillor R Tillson (resigned 03/07/23)

Deputy Mayor, Councillor P J Coe

Councillor K Terry

Councillor E Carr (since 04/09/23)

For information about the work of a local council and the role of a Councillor and for details about how to apply to become a Town Councillor, please visit the Town Council website:

www.newromney-tc.gov.uk

Alternatively, please contact the Town Clerk:

town.clerk@newromney-tc.gov.uk

Tel: 01797 362348

COUNCILLORS' ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

17 MAY 2023 UP TO AND INCLUDING 27 MARCH 2024

FULL COUNCIL

POSSIBLE

ACTUAL

Coast Ward

Councillor P D Thomas

12

11

Councillor P J Coe

12

12

Councillor J M Hiscock

12

10

Councillor K Terry

12

12

Councillor S O'Hare

12

11

Councillor Meredith

12

9

Councillor L Glover

12

7

Councillor R Tillson (resigned)

2

2

Councillor E Carr

8

6

Town Ward

| | | |
|-----------------------------|----|----|
| Councillor J Rivers | 12 | 12 |
| Councillor J Davies | 12 | 11 |
| Councillor Rev Cn McLachlan | 12 | 9 |
| Councillor P Carey | 12 | 10 |
| Councillor W D Wimble | 12 | 4 |
| Councillor J Houston | 12 | 8 |
| Councillor L Phillips | 12 | 8 |
| Councillor S Hodges | 12 | 5 |

STANDING COMMITTEES

| <u>Finance & General Purposes Committee</u> | <u>Possible</u> | <u>Actual</u> |
|--|------------------------|----------------------|
| Councillor P Thomas | 6 | 4 |
| Councillor K Terry | 6 | 5 |
| Councillor P Coe | 6 | 6 |
| Councillor W D Wimble | 6 | 0 |
| Councillor J Rivers | 6 | 6 |
| Councillor J Davies | 6 | 6 |
| Councillor R Tillson (resigned) | 1 | 0 |
| Councillor P Carey | 6 | 4 |
| Councillor Rev Cn S McLachlan | 6 | 4 |
| Councillor L Phillips | 6 | 0 |

| <u>Planning Committee</u> | <u>Possible</u> | <u>Actual</u> |
|---|------------------------|----------------------|
| Councillor P Thomas (resigned from Committee) | 1 | 1 |
| Councillor P Coe | 15 | 15 |
| Councillor R Tillson (resigned) | 2 | 0 |
| Councillor J Rivers | 15 | 14 |
| Councillor K Terry | 15 | 14 |
| Councillor P Carey | 15 | 14 |
| Councillor J Davies (since 12/07/23) | 12 | 10 |
| Councillor S O'Hare (since 21/06/23) | 14 | 13 |
| Councillor L Phillips | 15 | 13 |
| Councillor J Houston | 15 | 9 |

| <u>Personnel Committee</u> | <u>Possible</u> | <u>Actual</u> |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Councillor P Thomas | 7 | 6 |
| Councillor J Hiscock (since 16/08/23) | 6 | 5 |
| Councillor R Tillson (resigned) | 1 | 0 |
| Councillor J Rivers | 7 | 5 |
| Councillor J Davies | 7 | 6 |
| Councillor P Coe | 7 | 6 |

| <u>Health & Wellbeing Committee</u> | <u>Possible</u> | <u>Actual</u> |
|--|------------------------|----------------------|
| Councillor P Thomas | 4 | 3 |
| Councillor P Coe | 4 | 3 |
| Councillor J Houston | 4 | 2 |
| Councillor J Rivers | 4 | 3 |
| Councillor K Terry | 4 | 4 |
| Councillor J Hiscock | 4 | 4 |
| Councillor J Davies | 4 | 4 |
| Councillor Rev Cn S McLachlan | 4 | 2 |
| Councillor S Hodges | 4 | 3 |

STEERING GROUPS

| <u>Maude Community Centre Project</u> | <u>Possible</u> | <u>Actual</u> |
|--|------------------------|----------------------|
| Councillor P Thomas | 7 | 7 |
| Councillor P Coe | 7 | 7 |
| Councillor R Tillson (resigned) | 1 | 1 |
| Councillor J Davies | 7 | 5 |
| Councillor Rev Cn S McLachlan | 7 | 6 |
| Councillor W D Wimble | 5 | 1 |

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

2023/24 Budget Analysis

The Town Council's income and expenditure for the year 2023/24 is on target to balance. The cost of New Romney Town Council's services for a Band D property for the financial year was £127.40 equating to £10.61 per month or £2.45 per week.

The Town Council's Precept for the year 2024/25 in the amount of £396,952.00 represents an annual cost of £132.83 for New Romney Town Council's services for a Band D property for the year – which is a 4.26% increase on the previous year (equating to 45p per calendar month / 10p per week).

Analysis of Proposed Income and Expenditure for 2024/25

| <u>Income</u> | <u>£</u> |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| New Romney Town and Coast Tax Payers | 396,952.00 |
| Hire of Land and Properties | 20,980.00 |
| Allotment Rents | 2,500.00 |
| Hut & Winch Site Rents | 7,500.00 |
| Other Income | <u>10,008.00</u> |
| Total Income | <u>437,940.00</u> |

Expenditure

| | |
|--|--------------------------|
| Finance & General Purposes Committee | |
| Sports Field and Maude Pavilion | 2,369.00 |
| Fairfield Road Recreation Ground | 3,980.00 |
| The Greens | 13,531.00 |
| Flagstaff Land | 1,044.00 |
| Allotment Gardens | 2,960.00 |
| Land at Coney Banks | 50.00 |
| Town Square | 80.00 |
| Garden of Remembrance | 300.00 |
| Assembly Rooms | 7,815.00 |
| Community Hall | 1,952.00 |
| Town Hall | 17,160.00 |
| Town Hall House | 3,807.00 |
| Insurances | 6,505.00 |
| Legal & Professional Fees | 10,000.00 |
| Donations | 6,583.00 |
| Subscriptions | 4,750.00 |
| Office Equipment | 2,500.00 |
| Computer Maintenance | 7,000.00 |
| Phone/Internet | 2,374.00 |
| Printing & Stationery | 750.00 |
| Public Clock | 400.00 |
| Postage and Petty Cash | 750.00 |
| Admin & Miscellaneous (inc. Mayor's/Civic Allowance) | 16,874.00 |
| Bank Charges | 500.00 |
| Payroll Outsourcing | 491.00 |
| Reserve Fund Contributions | 66,400.00 |
| Councillor Training | 4,000.00 |
| Contingency | 10,000.00 |
| PWLB Loan Repayment inc Interest | 58,895.00 |
| Other | 120.00 |
| Personnel Panel | 183,500.00 |
| Health & Wellbeing Committee | 250.00 |
| Planning Committee | <u>250.00</u> |
| Total Expenditure | <u>437,940.00</u> |

The Town Council is fully accountable to residents each year at the Annual Town Meeting at which time any questions may be raised.

The fully audited accounts for 2022/23 are available at the Town Hall for perusal by prior arrangement.

The Town Council has an approved Capital Spending Plan and an approved Investment Policy which are reviewed annually, details of which are available from the Town Hall by prior request.



New Romney Town Council

New Romney Town Council has continued its hard work for the benefit of our community and local environment so that New Romney remains a desirable place to live, work and visit:

JANUARY 2023:

*Plans for King Charles III Coronation Commemorations in hand

*Installation of new bollards around the Princess Diana Memorial Garden completed

*Successfully acquired borrowing approval to part-fund the proposed Community Hall, Sports Pavilion and Nursery project

FEBRUARY 2023:

* Worked with 1st New Romney Scout Group to facilitate the creation of a Tree Nursery adjacent New Romney Allotments

MARCH 2023:

* Work commenced on a new planning application pack for the revised Community Hall, Sports Pavilion and Nursery Project

*Installation of new Town Trail plaques around New Romney and Littlestone commenced

* Issue 1 of the New Romney Highway Improvement Plan approved and published

*Skate Park railings repaired and adapted for improved safety

APRIL 2023:

* Town Council Coronation Gift of gardening tools and equipment presented to St. Nicholas Primary Academy to create a Coronation Garden

* NRTC Pride of New Romney Awards presented at Annual Town Meeting

* Town Hall opening times increased to four mornings per week to support increased access to Town Council services

MAY 2023:

* Coronation Big Lunch 'Picnic in the Park' free community event organised and funded by New Romney Town Council

JUNE 2023:

*Work commenced on tendering pack for the revised Community Hall, Sports Pavilion and Nursery Project

*Commemorative Coronation Bench installed on St. Martin's Field

JULY 2023:

*Supported JAM on the Marsh Festival.

*Supported New Romney Country Fayre

*Unlawful and unauthorised encampment successfully removed from Station Road Sports Field and site secured with expediency

*Hosted public open day tours of the Town's historic Courtroom (Council Chamber) and Gaol

AUGUST 2023:

*Town Hall exterior re-decorated to maintain public listed building and assist in improving High Street appearance.

*Replacement vehicular gate and 2x retractable bollards installed at Station Road Sports Field to protect site for benefit of local residents.

SEPTEMBER 2023:

* Volunteer Partnership Working arrangement established with New Romney in Bloom to make local public open spaces more attractive for residents and visitors alike

*Traffic Surveys completed to inform objectives of the New Romney Highway Improvement Plan

*Town Hall Stairlift replaced to improve public accessibility to the Council Chamber

*NRTC 4-year Strategic Plan adopted and published

*Formal tendering process commenced in respect of revised Community Hall, Sports Pavilion and Nursery Project

OCTOBER 2023:

*Delayed Platinum Jubilee Commemorative Tree Bench installed on St. Martin's Field.

NOVEMBER 2023:

*Supported Annual Royal British Legion Remembrance Service and Burma Star Service

*Provided Town Centre Festive Lighting and Town Christmas Tree.

*10x FLOOD-SLOW DOWN signs purchased for use during local flood events to mitigate negative impact of inconsiderate drivers on local residents

DECEMBER 2023:

*Supported Light Up New Romney event.

Working Hard for Our Community!



*Provided free Community Christmas Concert

*New Romney Youth Council Constitution approved and adopted in readiness for establishment of a local Youth Council to provide young people with a voice within the community

*Tenders received for Community Hall, Sports Pavilion and Nursery Project

*Planning Consent acquired for revised Community Hall, Sports Pavilion and Nursery Project

JANUARY 2024:

*Plans for D-Day 80 Commemoration in hand

*Final stage of tendering process in hand to award Design and Build contract for delivery of New Romney's new Community Hall, Sports Pavilion and Nursery project

SPOTLIGHT ON HEALTHCARE & WELLBEING ON ROMNEY MARSH

New Romney Town Council has continued to work closely with Romney Marsh Community Hub and Invicta Health with the aim of assisting in any way possible in alleviating issues that affect local healthcare provision and communicating availability of a range of healthcare provision to local residents.

COMMUNITY HALL, SPORTS PAVILION AND NURSERY PROJECT IN FOCUS

The Town Council has continued to progress the Community Hall, Sports Pavilion and Nursery project despite a number of setbacks along the way. The project has now gone through a complete re-design phase in order that it can not only be delivered within a fixed budget but can also better meet the needs of key stakeholders as well as the wider community. Following renewed Town Council commitment to delivery, a new planning consent has now been acquired, approved funds drawn down and the formal tendering process is now in its final stage so that a Design and Build contract can be awarded to deliver these much-needed new facilities for the Town and its community.

... and, as always, all this has been achieved whilst maintaining and improving a large portfolio of public buildings and open spaces, providing grant funding for deserving local organisations and projects, responding to consultations and enquiries and engaging in a wide range of routine local government business etc.

New Romney Town Council leads, it listens and it works!

The Right Worshipful the Mayor of New Romney, Councillor John Rivers, observes:

"New Romney Town Council is proud and pleased to have recently developed and approved its first ever four-year strategic plan this past year in order to provide a more focused approach to improving the local area for the benefit of the Town's residents.

It has also developed and approved a Highway Improvement Plan for New Romney, to help enhance local road safety, and is grateful to all of those residents who attended public engagement events organised by the Council, and which contributed to the development of the Plan, which, over time, will help to make New Romney a safer place.

Having taken the positive step of re-visiting the design and costs of the Community Hall, Sports Pavilion and Nursery project, and, having now acquired planning consent for the revised project, the Town Council is in the final stage of the formal tendering process and aiming to award a contract to deliver the project very soon, so exciting times are ahead in 2024.

We have been delighted to support a number of local community events during the past year, including JAM on the Marsh festival, New Romney Country Fayre and Light Up New Romney and equally delighted to have hosted a number of our own free events for the Community, including a Coronation Picnic in the Park and the annual Community Christmas Concert – all of which helps to bring local residents together and strengthen community bonds.

During this past year, we have worked hard as a Council, once again, to continue making New Romney a better place to live, work and visit and look forward to another successful year in 2024 focusing on this aim and building a stronger community".



**NEW ROMNEY TOWN COUNCIL
...Working Proactively For and With
the Local Community!**



New Romney Commemorates



on The Greens, Littlestone

- Reenactors from 7.30pm
- Pipe Band
- Commemoration ceremony with music and words from 8.40pm
- National Beacon Lighting at 9.15pm

Everyone Welcome