

The Town Council offices are situated at

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Message from the Mayor

Welcome to the winter edition of 'About Wymondham', which is our first edition since the Spring issue, and our first collaboration with Wymondham Magazine.

I think I can safely say that 2020 will be a year that won't be forgotten for decades to come, and has thrown us many challenges to overcome. The onset of the coronavirus pandemic in February and ultimate periods of lockdown and special measures is an unprecedented event in peace time. I had not expected to be writing to you this Christmas, but Government guidance which prevented us from holding an AGM advised us that the current Town Council administration could continue until May 2021. I am immensely proud to still be Mayor of this wonderful town, and whilst I have continued to chair council meetings and help with the decision-making process, I have been unable to attend many functions in person; in fact, there have been hardly any functions to attend!

Most of our business has been conducted virtually via Zoom meetings, a media platform that not many of us, me included, had even heard of at this time last year.

Everything has been so different this year. No civic receptions, no church services, no Wynthefest, no Vintage Day, no Remembrance Sunday parade, and

no meeting with people in person, which is one part of my role I really enjoy and have missed so much. The few events I have been involved with have been so enjoyable - such as presenting a bouquet of flowers to a lovely lady upon her 100th birthday and presenting a special civic award to a person I have known most of my life, Mr Peter Parke (pictured) the Wymondham butcher who finally made the difficult decision to retire after serving the town for 72 years. What an amazing achievement for both of these people.

As always, I want to thank my fellow councillors and Town Council staff for their support throughout this very difficult year, I really appreciate all the help and guidance provided. I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to my lovely wife who has supported me throughout this difficult year.

I am sure we have all experienced a rollercoaster of emotions over this past year, perhaps some loneliness or the loss of a loved one, a sad event that befell our family in April as we lost my very dear father-in-law to Covid-19. But maybe lockdown also gave some of us a chance to experience some well needed family time and perhaps 'reset the switch' and connect with loved ones near and far both at home and by using some of the amazing technology we have at our disposal now.

Christmas is almost upon us again, a time when we reflect upon the last year, look

forward to meeting friends and family and focus upon the year ahead. As we know reflection upon the last year is a gargantuan task that is exponentially difficult this time around. I don't think many of us would know where to begin? At the moment we cannot look forward to mass family gatherings this Christmas, and it is entirely possible that it will be a meeting of only six at any one time, but we can still communicate and send our love and best wishes to each other as we look forward to 2021. I think we are all looking forward to 2021 with hope in our hearts, especially given the promising news that a vaccine against Covid-19 is on the horizon. Maybe normal will return and Christmas next year will see family gatherings again, and the return of going out with friends and family.

I must pay the utmost respect to all our NHS staff, for all they have given, and say a massive thank you to all the volunteers and charitable organisations that helped us navigate through the pandemic. We can all learn from these wonderful people and apply some of their kindness to our everyday lives. Let us keep an eye on our elderly neighbours, perhaps drop a Christmas card through their door with a short message and a phone number beneath the message to let them know they have someone to call on if they need help? If we have some bad weather maybe just helping to put their bin out or clear their path. By doing this we still social distance but we lend that extra helping hand; I am sure they will appreciate your efforts. >

> These acts of kindness can mean so much, especially at Christmas, but take up such a small amount of time. Let us put the bad news stories behind us for a few weeks and look forward to realising the true meaning of Christmas.

I will look forward to the remainder of my term of office, and hope that come the spring time we may be able to begin meeting a few people again. Please take care of yourselves and look out for others. May I take this opportunity to wish every one of you a happy and peaceful Christmas, and a New Year truly filled with hope and optimism.

Cllr Kevin Hurn

Tribute to Michael Armstrong



Michael Armstrong, who became a cinema legend in the local community and much further afield, has passed away at the age of 73.

His cinematic story goes back to 1957 when his parents took over the Queen's Head pub not far from the town's Regal Cinema in Friarscroft Lane. Bert Caley, who ran the Regal, and his wife Dorothy, became friends and from

about the age of 11 the cinema became Michael's second home. He loved to watch the projectionists at work and on Saturday nights he would go and fetch fish and chips for them. He went on to deliver leaflets advertising future attractions and eventually helped with projection. A cinema legend was born. For years he was a great support to Les King, the legendary Regal cinema manager.

The Regal closed in 1993, but Michael was determined to keep its memory alive. Now living in the family's Avenue Road house he had the garage converted into a replica mini Regal, incorporating some fixtures and fittings from the big one, with posters and other memorabilia displayed. And many locals and film lovers from further afield enjoyed screenings and Michael's hospitality. Later after his dear mother Cath passed away the cinema was incorporated into his purpose-built bungalow in Middleton Street. In 2000 a new seat was installed in Market Street commemorating Wymondham's Regal Cinema (1937-1993) and paid for by donations from visitors to Michael's replica cinema. Forties film favourite Jean Kent travelled to the town to officially unveil it and became a good friend of the group, as well as of Michael and his mother. In the same year Cinema City suggested a one-off screening in the old Regal and Michael agreed to help. The film chosen was the Ealing comedy *The Titfield Thunderbolt* and it was such a success that further shows were held – and *The Regal Experience* was born.

Michael, who worked in a solicitor's office, had accumulated a large collection of Regal memorabilia and he put together *The Wymondham Regal Story Exhibition* for the Heritage Museum's 2002 season. It was officially opened by 1950s star Anne Aubrey, while Jean Kent came to view it. A year later Jean was in Wymondham again for the screening of her movie *The*

Woman in Question and at the show Michael was presented with a richly deserved Civic Award for services to local cinema by the then town mayor Martin Wynne.

He was much admired and loved in Wymondham and the wider community.

He will be sorely missed by many.

Work on Neighbourhood Plan gets underway

Having secured the designation of Wymondham as a Neighbourhood Area, the Town Council is pleased to report work on a Neighbourhood Plan for the town and its surroundings is now underway.

Neighbourhood Plans were introduced in 2011 by the Localism Act. They give communities an opportunity to have a genuine say about the future of their area; if they are approved, they become part of the statutory planning policy framework for an area. Many Parishes across Norfolk have already taken the opportunity to prepare Plans for their patch and there are some fantastic examples out there of what creative Plans can do.

Responsibility for preparing a Neighbourhood Plan in this case rests with Town Council, who have assembled a team of stakeholders and community representatives who had their first meeting a few weeks ago. At the moment the team is concentrating on doing background research and collecting views on what people like or dislike about the town.

There will be numerous ways for the community to get involved as the plan is developed over the next few months and the team is committed to ensuring that it can engage and consult as widely as possible whilst adhering to any prevailing Covid restrictions. Right now as part of its research the team has launched an online survey which will be up and running for the next few months to collate community opinions. The survey can be found by following this link <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/2SGPJJK> or by scanning the QR code at the end of this article. There will be lots of other ways to get involved in the Plan over the coming months that will be publicised in various ways.

Once a Neighbourhood Plan is adopted it forms part of the wider Development Plan, which means it must be taken into account when assessing planning applications for new development in that area. Unlike other non-statutory documents that may have been prepared in the past, this means it has genuine weight to influence change. Neighbourhood Plans cannot be used to block development or deviate significantly from adopted strategic policy; but what they can do is help to ensure the local views are genuinely reflected in planning policy and that the local character and individuality of places such as Wymondham are represented.

Preparing a Plan from start to finish is likely to take over a year. We will be updating the community about key steps in the process and how and when everyone can get involved in due course. In the meantime, keep an eye on the town notice boards and the Town Council website for further updates and information.



Wymondham Town Council

How it works, what it does, where your money is spent

How does your Town Council work for you?

The 14 members of Wymondham Town Council are all unpaid volunteers, elected by Wymondham people every four years. Elections took place in May 2019. Each year the councillors elect a Mayor and Deputy Mayor from among their members.

The full Town Council meets on the first Tuesday of every month. It takes questions from the public, notes minutes from its committees and receives reports from representatives on outside bodies. It also approves all payments to suppliers from the preceding month and discusses issues relevant to the town.

Some of the Town Council's functions are delegated to three main committees and these meet on Tuesdays in accordance with the schedule published on the council website. Each committee consists of five members who elect their own chair and vice chair. These committees are:

Leisure, Environment, Enterprise and Tourism, which supervises the maintenance, upkeep and improvement of the Council's recreation areas such as Ketts Park and Browick Road recreation ground. It is responsible for ensuring that play equipment meets health and safety requirements and that residents have access to leisure facilities. It is also responsible for other open spaces, such

as the Tolls Meadow nature reserve, the Becketswell amenity area and the allotments.

Planning, Lighting & Highways liaises closely with Norfolk County Council and South Norfolk Council on all road, pavement and lighting issues affecting the Wymondham parish. It takes a strategic planning overview for the town and works in conjunction with the county and district councils. While it does not grant planning approvals (normally the responsibility of South Norfolk Council), the Town Council is consulted on all applications affecting Wymondham.

Finance & General Purposes manages property owned or leased by the council, including the cemetery and the charter Friday market. It also allocates funds under the council's small grants scheme and is responsible for machinery purchases and the council's administration team. Its remit also includes the Grade 1 listed Market Cross and the provision of Tourist Information Centre facilities provided by the council staff.

Agendas are posted on the Town Council notice board and agendas and meetings for council meetings are published on the council website, and these indicate the starting time. Public participation is allowed at all meetings at the allocated time.

A closer look at planning

Planning can be a complex and often contentious matter. The Town Council's Planning, Lighting and Highways Committee works within a planning policy framework which explains how planning applications are dealt with, and how decisions are made.

South Norfolk Council has the final say in planning matters. Sometimes its Planning Committee will delegate decisions on appropriate cases to planning officers in consultation with local members. All applications are forwarded first to the Town Council for comment, and details of applications

are posted on the council noticeboard. Plans are available for consultation in the office, or through the South Norfolk Council website, and considered at a council or committee meeting.

Letters from the public commenting on applications are welcome, and time is always allowed at the start of meetings for public comments to be made in person. The Town Council will then comment to the District Council in the light of the local plan and other policy guidance, taking into account any public comments and the considered views of its members.

Who are your councillors?

As a result of the elections in May 2019, the following have been elected to serve until the next Local Government elections in May 2023 (May 2021 for County Councillors), representing Wymondham on the county (NCC), district (SNC) and or town councils.

Central

Miss W Batchelor	16 Esprit Close, NR18 9LY	07718 594142	wednesdaybatchelor@hotmail.co.uk	WTC
Mr R Savage	Kingston, 6 Park Lane, NR18 9BG	01953 603722	rsavage@s-norfolk.gov.uk	WTC, SNC
Mr K Hurn	10 Sheffield Road, NR18 0LX	01953 798492	kevin.hurn.kh@gmail.com	WTC, SNC
Mr I Flatt	48 Orchard Way, NR18 0NY	01953 603398	ianorchardflatt@hotmail.com	WTC
Mr P Travis	33 Damgate Street, NR18 0BG	01953 601777	pete@petegreen.co.uk	WTC

East

Mr P Broome	14 Bramble Way, NR18 0UN	01953 600829	pbroome.309@gmail.com	WTC
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North

Mrs Y Astley	142 Norwich Road, NR18 0UX	01953 600852	yvette.astley72@gmail.com	WTC
Mr A Holden	31 Ashleigh Gardens, NR18 0EX	01953 857316	tholden88@yahoo.com	WTC, SNC
Mr J Hornby	9 Papillon Road, NR18 0WD	01953 600300	cllrhornby@gmail.com	WTC, SNC
Miss P Hubble	11 Petunia Court, NR18 0FR	01953 604113	pennylibdem@gmail.com	WTC
Mr D Roberts	12 Rothbury Close, NR18 0LE	01953 605510	dave.roberts.libdem@gmail.com	WTC

South

Mr J Halls	2 Chapel Loke, Spooner Row, NR18 9LS	01953 600720	julian.halls@talktalk.net	WTC, SNC
Mrs A James	62 Wood Avens Way, NR18 0XP	01953 605554	annetlibdem@gmail.com	WTC
Mrs S Nuri	15 Silfield Avenue, NR18 9BD	01953 601108	suzannelibdem@gmail.com	WTC, SNC

County councillors

Wymondham

Mr J F Mooney	2 Orchard Way, NR18 9NX	01953 604482	joe.mooney.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk
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Forehoe

Mr C Foulger	4 High Banks, Wymondham, NR18 0UZ	07745 163169	colin.foulger.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk
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