



“Working together for Ross-on-Wye”

ROWTOP PROGRESS GROUP (RPG)

Thursday 2nd September 2010

7.15pm

The Larruperz Centre

Present: Mary Brewin (RPG, resident), Rob Brain (RPG Chair, resident), Cllr Brian Atherton (Ross Rural, RPG), Cllr Caroline Utting (Ross Town, RPG secretary), Jeronimo Maeso (RPG, resident), Cllr John Edwards (Ross Town, RPG Treasurer), Dennis Humble (RPG, EnviroAbility), Chris Gooding (Herefordshire Partnership), Brian Marshall (RPG, resident), Margaret & Peter Thacker (Friends of St Mary’s), Andrew Wheatley (Friends of St Mary’s), Sam Philips (Ramblers & Walkers are Welcome), Richard Hankins (Transition Ross), Paul Mason (JKHS Adult Learning), Isabel Pebody (Ross Quaker Meeting), Liz Roberts (Tourist Information Centre), Stephen Earl (Ross Sports and Leisure Federation).

Apologies: Dai Harries (RPG, resident), Colin Gray (Tudorville Community Association), John Taylor (Tudorville Allotment Association), Cllr Jane Roberts (Ross Town, RPG), Cllr Chris Bartrum (Ross Town, RPG), Alison Griffiths (Age Concern), Sue Gasston (New Life Church).

Welcome: Rob welcomed everyone to the meeting. He hoped that those present would be able to have a constructive discussion concerning the Town Plan and how it can be supported now that the Town Council has adopted it.

Minutes of the previous meeting: These were not considered.

Matters arising: These were not considered.

Presentation by The Friends of St Mary’s: The Friends of St Mary’s made a power point presentation on their plans for a new community hall to be built attached to the church. Already an old boiler house which resembled a decaying bicycle shed had been replaced and a more efficient boiler installed and the heritage of the church had been preserved for future generations by extensive repairs to the spire, tower and roof. The new hall would incorporate proper access and facilities for people with disabilities, and would provide much improved arrangements for church and public use. The Friends of St Mary’s was looking for support from the Ross community for this project and would be happy to make the presentation to other groups who might be interested in what the church is doing. Anyone interested is invited to contact Peter Thacker (tel 01989 562628, or e-mail pwthack@waitrose.com). Peter asked that the Rowtop Progress Group consider writing a letter of support for the project that can be used when funding applications are made. **Action on RPG to meet to discuss this proposal.** There was then an opportunity for questions.

Report from Ross Town Council: Cllr John Edwards set out what action the Town Council had already taken to implement the Plan. A budget of £25,000 had been set aside for implementation of the Plan this year. A working group had been set up to look at the provision of more allotments and a picnic site by the river. The Sports and Leisure Federation was looking into setting up a cinema and had taken the first steps towards this through the formation of a cinema club. Work to improve the facilities at The Wilton Rd Sports Centre was still being looked at and another sub-committee of the council was looking into the issue of signage in the town. Caroline drew the meetings attention to a newspaper cutting that Dai Harries had sent along concerning the cluttering effect of too much street furniture and signage, suggesting that the group should ask the residents of Ross for their ideas on how the situation could be improved. It was felt that as the town council has a group looking at this issue there was no need to.

Open Forum Discussion: The Chair then opened the floor for a general discussion on aspects of the Ross Town Plan. It was agreed that a report of the meeting should be written and submitted to the press. **Action on Caroline.**

David Dawson spoke about the Civic Society's project to commission new maps for the notice boards in the town.

Liz Roberts spoke about the work ongoing to improve signage for coaches visiting Ross.

Sam Philips commented that signage is not just an issue for motorists as pedestrians are also often confused by the signage that is currently there or not there. Walkers are Welcome had recently received permission to add stickers to some of the signs to direct walkers into the town centre.

Richard Hankins talked about the provision of more allotments. Ideally they should be in the town or as close to it as possible. Dennis suggested that if it was called social gardening it might not be so difficult to find some land as the legal implications are not as rigid as they are for allotments.

David Dawson drew the meetings attention to Issue 22 concerning the heritage of Ross. He suggested that as The Friends of St Mary's, The Civic Society and The RoWToP Progress Group had many aims in common it would make sense for them to develop a dialogue and work more closely together.

Paul Mason spoke about his work at the John Kyrle High School Adult Learning Centre. Despite extensive publicity campaigns it seemed that many Ross people remained in ignorance of what is available at the centre. Paul asked for suggestions for more effective ways of getting his message across. Another issue that required attention was coordination of all the various classes that are provided in the area so that people could easily find out what was available. Caroline suggested that perhaps there could be a link to the Town Council website and that Paul write to the town Council to ask it to take action to set up a data base of courses available.

Brian Atherton proposed that a town councillor make a resolution to propose that the Town Council commission a study to address Issue 1 in the Town Plan – Economic Development. **Action on the Town Councillors in RPG.**

Caroline suggested that those present pick an issue from the Plan that interests them and write to the town Council to ask what action had so far been taken to address it. **Action on those present.**

Any other business: Caroline proposed that in future meetings be held by-monthly. This was agreed.

John raised the need for further copies of the Plan to be printed. Brian Atherton proposed and Dennis Humble seconded that an additional 100 copies be printed. This was carried unanimously.

Dennis asked how the Group wished to proceed with the disposal of the questionnaires. It was agreed that EnviroAbility be commissioned to shred them. They would provide bags that hold about 7 to 7.5 kilos at a cost of £3 a bag. This would include the provision of a certificate verifying the documents were disposed of in a safe/secure manor.

NEXT MEETING THURSDAY 4th November 7.15pm Larruperz Centre