



Easingwold Town Council

2020 - 2021



Annual Newsletter



Please contact EDCCA if you wish to volunteer to help local people; or, if you are having to self-isolate and need any help with shopping, collecting medication etc. If you are looking for local resources, please consult the EDDCA COVID-19 Support List on their website.

EDCCA, Police House, Church Hill, Easingwold YO61 3JX Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9.30am to 12.30pm Tel:01347822875 email: info@edcca.org.uk

The Easingwold Area Foodbank is there if you may need confidential food packages. The Foodbank helps local people in need and delivers throughout Easingwold and its surrounding villages. Please call their 24-hour message service on 0772 44 44 750 and they will discretely call you back.

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EASINGWOLD TOWN COUNCIL
Contact: Town Clerk
Easingwold Library, Market Place
Easingwold YO61 3AN Tel: 01347 822422

A Message from Council Chairman Peter Nottage

Despite the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic Easingwold has once again demonstrated that we are a positive and resilient community. Local people, businesses and organisations have adapted and responded well to the challenges and supported each other as best they could, and I am proud of the part that the Town Council has played.

The whole Town Council sends its condolences to those families amongst us who have lost loved ones this year; whether that loss was caused directly or indirectly by Covid. At the same time, for anyone who has been infected during the year, we hope that you have made a full recovery and that you are not suffering from any long-term consequences as a result.

Finally, we should like to thank everyone in the town for doing their best to help keep the town safe. The great neighbourliness and support shown across the community, and the respect for social distancing has been heart-warming. Adversity often brings out the best in people and we feel that has been true of Easingwold over the last 12 months. The adversity is not yet over, and if you are still experiencing difficulties, then please feel free to contact the Easingwold & District Community Care Association and/or the Easingwold Food Bank, whose details are shown to the left once again, and they will try their best to help.

Evidently, the role and work of the Council has continued unabated throughout and we are very grateful to our Clerks (Jane Bentley and Jean Fairbrother) and all our contractors for their adaptability and support in enabling this to happen so seamlessly. The Council has adapted too and has held almost all its meetings digitally. Despite the challenges we have been able to get a great deal done and this newsletter enables us to inform you all about that in a little more detail.

Not only did we have a pandemic to contend with; we faced the challenge of a difficult winter and some very severe weather. As a sign, many will have noticed how high the waters came in the Millfields wetland. The Town Council ensured that all the footpaths and areas it is responsible for were gritted and cleared as well as possible. Together with local donors and a huge effort from the public, they also contributed to a supply of grit that was made available for volunteers to spread, as needed, in places that NYCC Highways did not treat. Luckily, we have been blessed by a warmer and drier spring, although this has delayed some of our planting and field work.

In Millfields Park the meadows have been cut, but dry weather has delayed the wildflower border seeding. At the entrance we have cleared the wild hedging, installed a fence with new hedging and built up the land to begin to create a Friendship Garden; a place to welcome everyone as an island of calm. We have widened and completed the jogging/walking path, and we hope it will not be long before the Easingwold Park Run can begin again.

We have adapted our markets to keep them open throughout for everyone's benefit; and we have expanded the areas of our outdoor trading licences. Whilst this helps the traders, it also helps the vibrancy of our town. Please bring your custom in to our town and help our businesses thrive. In the meantime, please have a Covid vaccination whenever one is offered and stay safe.

Easingwold's Covid Response



We have all had to adapt to a life with so many more restrictions and risks than we can ever have anticipated or experienced before. At least we have had a beautiful town to take our exercise in, an open market and local stores to buy our essentials in, and the support of a good caring infrastructure.

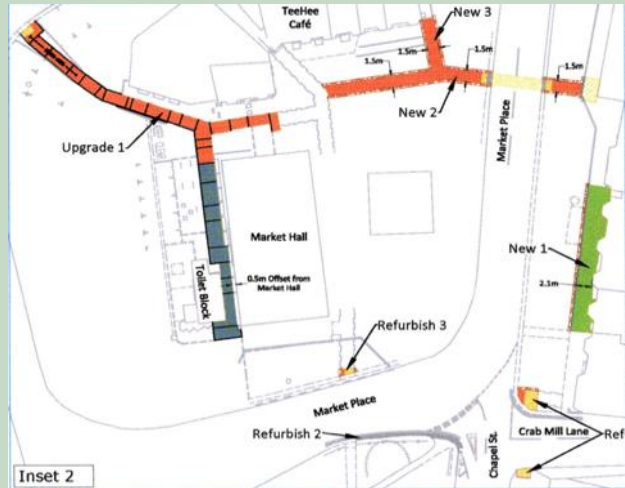
Right now, you will see that the Town Council has adjusted the outdoor licenses for our Cafes, Pubs and Restaurants to allow them more space and scope to support us. This permission has been extended to September, although we definitely hope that life is much closer to normal by then.



All around town, where there are pinch points on our pavements and footpaths, there are signs asking you to respect others and keep safe distancing. Please do this. Our local surgeries have established the South Hambleton Covid Vaccination Centre at our Galtres Centre. We are so grateful to them and all their local volunteers in the efforts to support us and make us all so much safer with their work. When you're called by them, please attend, get vaccinated and help protect lives.

The Town Centre Footpaths Project

The Council has nearly finalised its Town Centre Footpaths Scheme design and will consult the public when restrictions allow.



A section of new footpath is planned from the side of the Post Office to the bottom of Spring Street. Another new section would go through the marketplace cobbles in front of Tea-Hee! to the main road. The third new piece will go across the front of the George Hotel. The corners of the Chapel Street footpaths and those alongside the town hall and across the car park will be refurbished.

Easingwold in Bloom



Once again last summer our Easingwold in Bloom competition highlighted the town at its colourful best. This time our winner of best garden was in Rosemary Court; the best hanging baskets and planters were in Abbott Close; and the best commercial display was the Commercial Inn. Congratulations to all our winners and all those highly commended as well. Good luck this summer!

Our 2020-2021 Diary



Our Council Christmas lights brought greater joy to December as they were extended to Long Street for the first time. Our annual 'Easingwold in Lights' competition judges said: "With the current pandemic many homes and businesses had 'gone the extra mile' to create some beautiful displays which were greatly appreciated by the community". Despite strong competition, the domestic winners were in Abbotts Close with their eye-catching display making full use of their corner plot. The winners of the overall commercial display were the Commercial Inn on the Market Place; with Emsley Mavor Estate Agents winning the best window display category. Congratulations to all our winners, all those highly commended and thanks to everyone for adding to the visual appeal of our town.

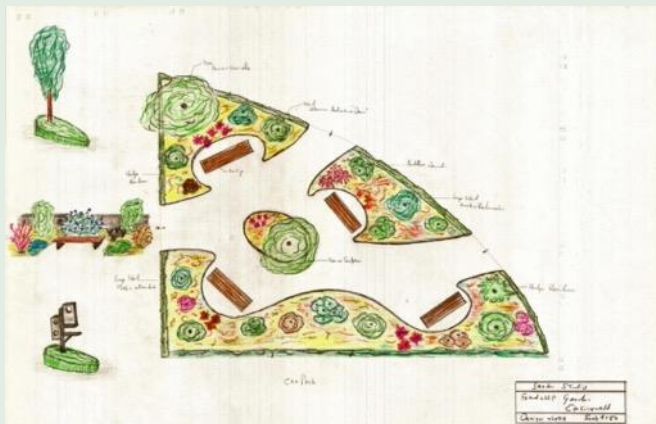
When the current Easingwold Town Council came into office in 2019 it worked hard to create its vision for the town as it evolves up to 2035. Please feel free to take a fresh look at this important document on our website, as it remains our guide, despite the necessity to adjust to managing the town in the Covid 19 pandemic. Let's say we've been 'finding ways to cope,' to say the least!

Everyone will have their stories to tell; throughout we have done our best to assure that the town has operated as smoothly as possible. We are very grateful to the many contractors who have helped us keep Easingwold looking good; our greens trimmed, and borders and tubs planted and looking radiant. We have two plantings a year for summer and winter and change the colour schemes to reflect the mood of the times. This year we've gone for strong vibrant colours to cheer us all up! Whilst we have kept up our strong maintenance programme for the Council's land and assets in the town, we have also formed a new finance sub-committee to see if we can do more. In partnership with the Lions and Friends of St Monica's four additional defibrillators have been introduced around town. Our VAS units are placed where traffic speeds are a concern, and the results are reported to the Police. We won funding from the AJ1 Police fund and NYCC to help us add high intensity LED lights to the crossing beside the Primary School to improve the warning to approaching drivers.

The Town Council Offices have continuously remained open, albeit not always being accessible to the public. We are grateful to our Town Clerks for their forbearance with these difficult circumstances and the adaptations necessary to make this possible. The Clerks are often there, working hard even when the Library building is closed to the public. They can still be contacted either by telephone or email if you need their support. The Council's meetings and activities are all documented on our website, so they too remain fully accessible. Finally, should you wish to attend any of our virtual meetings, then you can. To do so you will need to contact the Town Clerks; they will send you a link and the timing of the meeting so that you can have access. Should you wish to say something to the Council then 15 minutes early in each meeting is dedicated to questions from the public. So, if you indicate to the meeting Chairman you wish to speak, then you can ask a question or tell us what is on your mind, provided that the subject is related to an item on the agenda.

During the year the Council has shared the concerns expressed to it by many residents about the condition of local highways, byways and footpaths. We agreed and have written in detail to North Yorkshire County Council Highways on behalf of the town; subsequently having productive meetings with them. Whilst their funding is severely constrained, they have been able to promise to refurbish Church Hill as well as part of Raskelf Road in the current financial year. Some stretches of footpath in both Long Street and the Market Place have also been re-done. We are constantly looking for new sources of funds and grants to help us improve the condition of the Town Council's property and extend the range of facilities we can offer the town. We have plans to improve all our parks, children's recreation areas, greens and the town centre as money becomes available.

One of our most important projects, the refurbishment of the public toilets in the marketplace has now been completed. This means that the ladies, disabled and baby changing facilities have been fully refreshed. You will also see that the doors have been changed and that they now have automatic locking devices on them so that we can ensure that they are always available at the specified opening times. Sadly, we have not been able to have our usual programme of events during the course of the year due to the Covid restrictions being in place. However, we hope that this will change from May onwards. To help with this we will be investing in some musicians giving us a summer of song in the town centre on Saturday lunchtimes. We hope you will come along regularly and enjoy the ambience.



As always, the continued evolution of Millfields Park is a major undertaking for the Council. We have a new noticeboard and map at the entrance. The so-called Horseshoe Path has been widened and extended into an oval that can be used by the Park Run and casual walkers/joggers. The regular cutting of the meadows has commenced with a view to improving their visual appeal and biodiversity using advice from the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust.

A new project has begun with the commencement of the Friendship Garden alongside the front car park/main entrance. It has been professionally designed (left) to be a place of calm with high sensory and visual quality where all the Easingwold and District community can gather, relax, and enjoy our most popular park irrespective of their abilities and capabilities. A place where they can see what is going on, join in with the fun, relax, meet friends and feel part of the town community.

Town Council

Our Thank-You Flag still flies over Easingwold in honour not just of the NHS, but also all the Care Workers, Key Workers and Volunteers that are helping us through the current crisis.



- We are continuing to hold all our meetings by video-link, although they remain fully accessible. We understand that we will be expected to revert to physical meetings later this year. When that happens, we will arrange to hold any meetings safely in line with relevant government Covid 19 guidelines.
- The agendas for all our meetings will be published in advance on our website and in local Facebook groups so that you can see if something that will interest you or about which you would like to comment is going to be discussed. If so, then you can attend.
- The Council will continue with its routine maintenance programmes around the town; but we will still be operating these works to strict social distancing criteria. Please respect their important role for the Community
- We are always concerned that dog owners are being less vigilant than normal in clearing up and taking their pet's waste home or into our waste bins. Equally, please pick up litter and put that in the bins provided too!

Recreation & Open Spaces Committee

- This committee oversees a strong programme of maintenance and support for our open and recreational spaces and our children's play areas. In particular, the play areas have a working group who interact with quarterly professional inspections to assure that all the equipment is in good order and safe to use. Please contact the Clerks if you identify issues that may need attention
- We are replacing the roundabout in the Memorial Park children's play area. We are investigating how to improve the condition of its hedges, fences and walls. Investment costs for this will be high and so may take several years to complete and be affordable. We are refurbishing the Band Stand, and have agreed with the Easingwold Bowling Club to replace the green corrugated fencing that has fallen into disrepair
- As expressed elsewhere our programme of work in Millfields Park has continued along the lines of our vision. The lighting proposal for the jogging/walking path is under preparation for public consultation when conditions allow
- We have continued our programme of tree works throughout the year. We have felled some dangerous trees in Mallison Hill Woods and pruned some others. We've also installed a log seating area there, at a point where you can view out to Thornton Hill.

Operations Committee

- Our offices are open. However, could we please remind you that, whilst our Town Clerks will help your needs as much as they can, the Town Council has limited responsibilities. If you wish to report issues relating to highways, drainage, lighting etc. please do this to NYCC or HDC via their helplines or websites
- We have kept the Friday Market open to help assure access to food and other essentials. From late April we have been able to extend to non-essential goods and we are creating a facility for two casual stallholders to attend each week from now on, to add variation and interest to the goods on offer
- We have established a new monthly craft market for Easingwold, the 'Little Bird Artisan Market'. This will be held on the second Saturday in the month and improve our offer and increase visitor levels. Sadly, the Northern Dales Farmers Market have decided to suspend trading from Easingwold, but we are open to other options
- We are working with the HDC Vibrant Market Towns Initiative and Wold-class Business forum to get Easingwold back on its feet again. We do hope that you will all return in force to our town centre and its traders and businesses as the pandemic recedes.

Social & Events Committee

- The Council website, email, WiFi and IT systems have been updated and improved during the year. Please go on-line to www.easingwold.gov.uk and look for yourselves
- The Council is using its budget for Promoting Easingwold to bring Saturday entertainment to the town square, and plan a full *Easingwold Summer of Music* this year
- Inclusion and accessibility are important aspects of the ETC programme. We support a broad range of local groups and organisations, as well as our Friendliness Initiative
- Our programme of grants and donations is extensive; but is exclusively in support of local organisations. Should an organisation with which you are involved be looking for support; either financial or in any other way, please contact the Clerks for the necessary forms
- In conjunction with the North Yorkshire Youth Organisation, we have established a Youth Council for the town that has been meeting monthly by video call, but soon will be out and about again. This year they have provided a table tennis facility in the Memorial Park for everyone to use. Should any young people aged between 11-19, or 25 with additional needs, like to join in then please contact the Clerks and they will put you in touch with the Organising Team.