

Ramsgate Town Council : Ramsgate Town Plan (2015-2019)

Housing and Development

1st : Restrict development on open spaces

Ramsgate Town Council (RTC) will support and engage with Thanet District Council (TDC) in relation to TDC's Local Development Plan (LDP) and Corporate Plan to prevent development on all recreational spaces and parks in Ramsgate. For example, Montefiore Woodland has been designated as a Village Green.

£43,000 Vattenfall Windfarm donation to be used to renovate Eastcliff and Westcliff Gardens. Maderia Walk Rockery planted already and clearance work to Victoria Parade and Winterstoke completed. New planting scheduled for March 2015.

Importance: High

Responsibility: RTC/TDC

Timescale: On going

2nd : Improve range of shops available

RTC will encourage an improved range of shops and individual entrepreneurial retailers to offer a alternative market to the chain stores found at Westwood Cross shopping centre. RTC Town Promoter (TP) to engage and work with all businesses in the town and with the Town Team (TT) to bring in pop up shops, shop front improvements and empty shops back in to use. Contact Suzy Humphries, the Town Promotor, (town.promoter@ramsgatetc.org.uk) for more information. RTC engaging with TDC to produce a Master Plan for King Street with particular focus on a new use for the Swiss Cottage Public House. TDC has carried out a building conditions survey. Concept drawings for King Street available now. Masterplan out to consultation with residents and businesses, 3rd March 2015.

Importance: High

Responsibility: TP/TT/RTC/TDC

Timescale: Urgent

3rd : Support more affordable housing and properties to rent

RTC will seek to influence the housing mix throughout the town via TDC's LDP and consultation with the residents. RTC councillors and residents to identify empty shops and homes in their wards and bring them to the attention of TDC's Empty Properties Manager (Lesley.Dalton@thanet.gov.uk) who will add the information to the Empty Properties Register. RTC to liaise with TDC concerning the identification of empty houses and flats above shops and ideas of how to bring them back into use. TDC have already renovated 56 properties in the town with another 15 earmarked for work. Kent County Council (KCC) has funding available for homeowners through their No Use Empty scheme. TDC are in the process of purchasing redundant garage sites, for example in Brights Place, for housing development. RTC to also encourage the development of brown field sites such as the old Gas Works at Boundary Road for new housing and to encourage TDC to enforce decontamination of the site by the owners. TDC to double council tax on properties which are empty for more than six months. TDC has a legal responsibility to create a Local Plan. RTC is a statutory consultee and has input for Ramsgate. Consultation via TDC from 6th January to 6th March 2015.

RTC councillors have lobbied TDC to extend selective licensing of all privately rented properties (from Cliftonville only) to Ramsgate and the rest of Thanet as well. RTC will encourage TDC to serve safety enforcement notices on all derelict properties in the town.

Importance: High

Responsibility: RTC/TDC/KCC/residents

Timescale: Urgent

4th : Create more primary school places

KCC responsibility. Ramsgate has a shortage of primary school places. Some expansion of school places has taken place already. For example, Newington Community Primary School and Nursery has grown from two forms of entry to three. New buildings completed May 2014. Some schools will expand subject to planning permission. For example, Bromstone Primary School to increase from two to three forms of entry. Currently out to consultation. For all KCC published admissions numbers, preferences and planned expansions, please see the information on RTC's website at www.ramsgatetown.org. New Special Needs School being constructed now at Eurokent site opposite the Marlowe Academy.

Importance: High

Responsibility: KCC

Timescale: Urgent

Transport and Infrastructure

1st : Improve parking provision

RTC to ask TDC for a parking review of the whole town. This review to include all public car parks, in particular, Pier Yard, Staffordshire Street and Leopold Street car parks, plus the issue of illegal parking, confused/redundant signage and improved signage for pedestrians. TDC asking for expressions of interest in Staffordshire Street car park to develop the land for leisure use with retention of some parking.

In addition, the pedestrianisation of Harbour Parade should be a priority. A permanent coach park should be allocated. TDC's Thanet Parking Policy (2015-2020) suggests a site at Ramsgate port. Possible addition of residents' permit parking zones by TDC on the Westcliff, Eastcliff and around Ramsgate station to be requested.

Comprehensive review of season-ticket costs for all parking needed as well as TDC-backed deals with hotels in the town for their patrons using Leopold Street car park. More TDC enforcement officers and better focus of resources needed to combat illegal parking, especially on Sundays.

RTC councillors have liaised with Police and TDC Enforcement Officers to seek to regularly enforce parking restrictions in the town. RTC encourages residents and visitors to use the car parks rather than on-street paid for parking as the car parks are underutilised. RTC will also promote restricted weekend parking in Harbour Parade and encourage better enforcement by TDC. RTC welcomes the free parking scheme on Saturdays in Leopold Street car park. RTC to lobby for review of taxi rank provision in central Ramsgate.

Importance: High

Responsibility: TDC

Timescale: Urgent

2nd : Improve public transport

Improve the quality of the bus service between Dover, Sandwich, Cliffsend, Nethercourt, Ramsgate and Westwood Cross and the link with the Discovery Park in Sandwich. Earlier and later services would accommodate those working at Discovery Park. RTC support a new HS1 railway station at Cliffsend providing that this development does not have any detrimental effect on the viability of Ramsgate train station.

KCC consultation on proposal being held now with deadline for receipt of comments by 27th March 2015.

RTC councillors have lobbied Southeastern Trains to improve the signage outside the station for walking routes and the Loop Bus routes to the town centre. The Loop and other bus timetables are available at the Visitor Information Centre and a link has been added on the RTC website for Stagecoach's website.

Importance: High

Responsibility: KCC Highways/Thanet Bus Partnership

Timescale: Urgent

3rd : Increase traffic calming

See priorities 1 and 2 above. Problem of narrow streets and large volume of residential street parking especially in the town centre. Encourage residents, businesses and visitors to use all car parks such as Leopold Street car park to reduce volume of on-street car parking, illegal parking and accidents. Make pricing scheme in Leopold Street car park more competitive. Free Saturday parking scheme a success.

Encourage town centre hotels such as Travelodge to offer deals to their patrons to use Leopold Street car park rather than using on-street parking. RTC will lobby KCC to introduce a 20mph speed limit for side roads in Ramsgate. Following lobbying from RTC councillors, TDC has introduced traffic calming on Military Road.

Importance: High

Responsibility: TDC/KCC

Timescale: Urgent

Tourism and Leisure

1st : Improve leisure facilities

New swimming pool and renovated sports centre in High Street completed Summer 2013. TDC's Destination Management Plan being implemented now. Involves participation from residents and businesses to improve quality of the beaches (Ramsgate Main Sands and the Western Undercliff) and the facilities connected with them, for example, the beach cafes and toilets and any adjacent public buildings which need upgrading or bringing back in to use. £500,000 investment from TDC. Ideas include review of shelters and shower facilities, wayfinding and signage upgrades. Feasibility study for a Beach Club on Ramsgate Main Sands and responses received are being reviewed by TDC now. Scheme to develop Pier Yard as a town square being formulated now by RTC and TDC in order to find potential partners. Consultation via planning process.

RTC's Active Ramsgate scheme in conjunction with KCC Explore Kent has promoted cycling and walking tours around the town (three routes) and geocaching since summer 2013. Sailing, canoeing and fishing schemes rolled out Summer 2014. Aim of the scheme is to support economic regeneration and healthy living. Contact the Town Promoter, Suzy Humphreys, for more details. In addition, £50,000 is being invested by TDC in installation of adult exercise equipment next to Melbourne Avenue children's playground. Works commencing now.

Importance: High Responsibility: RTC/TDC/residents/KCC Explore Kent Timescale: Now

2nd : Increase facilities for young people

See above. New skateboard park and children's play park completed at the Warre Rec. Residents' group designed skateboard park and involved in future development of additional facilities eg. toilet/shop. Jackey Baker's changing facilities to be renovated. New children's play park now also completed at King George VI Park and Jackey Baker's. See TDC website for details (www.thanet.gov.uk).

Importance: High Responsibility: RTC/TDC/residents Timescale: Now

3rd : Improve the promotion of events

RTC has a successful and wide-ranging events programme all year round. See www.ramsgatetown.org for details. RTC runs a Visitor Information Centre (VIC) at the Custom House to promote all events in the town.

RTC works with Ramsgate Events Organisation (REO) to organise and publicise future events. Contact Ralph Hoult (ralphhoul@aol.com) for REO or the Assistant Town Clerk, Eileen Richford, for more details on funding. RTC actively promotes Ramsgate by contracting the work of the Town Promoter, KCC Explore Kent and lobbying via TDC's Destination Management Plan.

Importance: Medium Responsibility: RTC/REO/residents Timescale: On going

4th : Create a "What's On In Ramsgate Guide" to attract visitors

Three issues have already been published and are delivered free of charge to every household in Ramsgate.

Guide is published every three months. For more information, please contact the RTC Technical Officer, Dean Williams (dean.williams@ramsgatetc.org.uk) Contributions welcome. If you do not receive a copy, please contact Dean Williams, and he will contact the publishers of the Community Ad Magazine on your behalf. RTC will ensure that copies of the magazine are distributed to Canterbury, as well as to Whitstable and other seaside towns in Kent.

Importance: Medium Responsibility: RTC/residents Timescale: On going

5th : More Twinning Events

RTC organise twinning events with other towns in Kent and Conflans in France. Please contact the Mayor of Ramsgate or the Deputy Mayor for further details via the Mayor's Administrative Assistant, Emma Brett, at emma.brett@ramsgatetc.org.uk. Please note that the Twinning Association is semi-autonomous but RTC actively encourages local groups to organise twinning events themselves.

Importance: Low

Responsibility: RTC/residents

Timescale: On going

Crime and Community

1st : Increase visible policing on streets

Need more visible neighbourhood policing. RTC has met with Police and discussed the issue. Police have reorganised their resources so that there is now at least one PCSO assigned to each ward in Ramsgate during the day. Each PCSO works out of Ramsgate Police station. Backed up by warranted officers who work out of Margate Police station and deal with urgent offences both during the day and at night.

New Kent-wide policing model now in operation. One Police Constable will be based in Ramsgate as well. To contact your local ward PCSO, email: csu.thanet@kent.pnn.police.uk. After pressure from RTC councillors, the new policing regime introduced by Kent Police has seen improvements in dealing with incidences of ASB and street drinking in the town centre, as well as Police response times. For all non emergency calls to the Police, phone 101. Current Ramsgate PCSO's are as follows: Paul Hollier (Central Harbour Ward), John Litchfield (Cliffsend and Pegwell Wards), Brian Lamberton (all Wards), James Musgrove (Eastcliff Ward), Nathan Prentice (Northwood and Nethercourt Wards) and James Tong (Montefiore Ward).

Importance: High

Responsibility: Kent Police

Timescale: 1st June 2014 onwards

2nd : Improve safety in town centre after dark

Increase police numbers on the streets throughout the whole week not just on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturday nights. RTC and TDC extended Dispersal Zone in town centre until 1st August 2014 because of the problem of street drinkers and skateboarders in town centre. Enforcement of selling alcohol to minors and drunks needs to be improved. RTC liaising with TDC Licensing and Community Safety plus Turning Point and Porchlight charities. RTC will continue to put pressure on Police to seek further improvements. See above. RTC considers JD Wetherspoons development in Pavillion building is a much needed regeneration project for the seafront and the town in general but will lobby TDC to ensure that the appropriate licence applies to this development and that it is properly enforced.

Importance: High

Responsibility: Kent Police/RTC/TDC/Community Safety

Timescale: Now

3rd : Improve street lighting

RTC conducted site visit with KCC Highways in April 2014 to put forward ideas to improve and consolidate the street lighting in the High Street, Kings Street and Leopold Street. KCC Highways improvements completed in Autumn 2014. RTC strongly objected to KCC plans to switch off or part-light a number of streets in Ramsgate. Most of these works have already been initiated, for example, on the port access road and on Winterstoke Way and Winterstoke Gardens. KCC have reviewed their policy and will now upgrade all their street lights throughout Kent to LED lights.

To report any lighting faults (specify fault, lamp number and location), please contact the Town Clerk, Richard Styles, (richard.styles@ramsgatetc.org.uk) who will report the fault to KCC on your behalf. Or contact your RTC ward councillor.

Importance: High

Responsibility: KCC Highways

Timescale: Now

4th : Improve safety in my own neighbourhood after dark

As above. Police recommend that residents set up Neighbourhood Watch schemes in their areas. Contact Kent Police at www.kent.police.uk. TDC Community Safety (CS) hold residents' meetings with local police every three months at different venues throughout the town. See TDC, RTC and Kent Police websites for more details.

Importance: High

Responsibility: TDC CS/Kent Police

Timescale: On going

Creating a healthy environment

1st : Discourage dog fouling

Lack of TDC enforcement officers and TDC dog wardens. Need to increase the fines levelled on the owners and name and shame them. Dog licence is needed for every owner. Requires a change in the law. Number of reported incidences to TDC has decreased from 82 (2012/13) to 43 (2013/14). RTC to work with TDC to find solutions to this problem, for example, RTC to fund a town warden. Please report any dog fouling to TDC at waste&streetcleaning@thanet.gov.uk. Or contact your RTC ward councillor. RTC councillors have lobbied TDC to provide more dog waste bins, with some success, for example in Boundary Road Park and the Warre Rec.

Importance: High

Responsibility: TDC/cent

Timescale: On going

2nd : Improve street cleaning

As above. Not enough TDC enforcement officers or street cleaners. RTC to work with TDC to improve the service provided and focus resources properly. After lobbying from RTC councillors, TDC carried out comprehensive deep clean of central Ramsgate pavements in Autumn 2014.

Residents encouraged to report spilt rubbish or missed waste and/or recycling collections to TDC at waste&streetcleaning@thanet.gov.uk; fly tipping to TDC at streetscene.enforcement@thanet.gov.uk; and dumped cars to car.parking@thanet.gov.uk. Or contact your RTC ward councillor. Town Team liaising with TDC and local businesses to organise deep clean programme, paint street furniture, for example, Augusta Steps, introduce new litter bins and remove weeds. RTC campaign to back up the deep clean programme. TDC purchased £30,000 of equipment to carry out clean up. RTC to lobby TDC to carry out deep clean of central Ramsgate at least once a year. Following introduction of new Thanet-wide TDC recycling scheme, recycling rates have doubled from 26% to 50%. Once scheme has settled down, RTC believe percentage recycling rates will continue to rise in the next four years.

Importance: High

Responsibility: TDC

Timescale: On going

3rd : Maintain public toilets

RTC to work with TDC to improve cleanliness of public toilets in Cavendish Street car park, Western Undercliff and Royal Esplanade. Renovate toilet block at Pier Yard. RTC could take over management of some of the toilets from TDC, subject to funding. Via the Destination Management Plan, RTC has input in to the future upkeep of Ramsgate's beachfront facilities which will include European-style beach clubs on Ramsgate Main Sands.

Importance: High

Responsibility: RTC/TDC

Timescale: On going

4th : Improve disabled access

Survey of central Ramsgate carried out September 2014. See report on RTC website. Questionnaire to be developed to gather data from disabled residents. Results to be published on the website.

Importance: High

Responsibility: KCC

Timescale: On going

5th : Provide more allotments for residents

RTC own and manage three allotment sites at Chilton Lane East, Chilton Lane West and Jackey Bakers. RTC also manage the Cemetery Gates and Margate Road sites on behalf of TDC. The total waiting list as of March 2015 is 84. Contact the Assistant Town Clerk for more details: (eileen.richford@ramsgatetc.org.uk).

Importance: Medium

Responsibility: TDC

Timescale: On going

RTC provides the following services

1st : Representing Ramsgate on town planning issues

Please contact your ward councillor for advice on any planning applications submitted in your ward you wish to comment on. Or contact the Assistant Town Clerk, Eileen Richford. RTC will continue to encourage the preservation and enhancement of Ramsgate's architectural heritage as a statutory consultee for planning applications received by TDC. RTC is the Local Authority responsible for development of a Neighbourhood Plan for Ramsgate via the Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group.

Importance: Medium

Responsibility: RTC/TDC

Timescale: On going

2nd : Events and events funding

Please contact the Assistant Town Clerk, Eileen Richford or Events Organiser, Ralph Hoult, for details. Please note that current applications for events outstrip available funding.

Importance: Medium

Responsibility: RTC

Timescale: On going

3rd : A Visitor Information Centre

Set up and run by RTC in the Customs House main entrance. Staffed by volunteers seven days a week, 10am to 4pm. More volunteers are needed. Please contact Ralph Hoult (ralphhoult@aol.com) if you are interested in getting involved. All welcome. VIC telephone number: 01843 598 750

Importance: Medium

Responsibility: RTC

Timescale: On going

4th : A Town Mayor

The Town Mayor and the Deputy Town Mayor can be contacted via the Mayor's Administrative Assistant, Emma Brett. The Mayor's Charity is run by David Hougham. Contact him by email: davehougham@hotmail.co.uk.

Importance: Medium

Responsibility: RTC

Timescale: On going

5th : Decorative Lighting

RTC provides Christmas lighting in the town centre every year. For more details, please contact the Town Clerk, Richard Styles, (richard.styles@ramsgatetc.org.uk).

Importance: Medium

Responsibility: RTC

Timescale: On going

6th : Allotments for residents

RTC owns and maintains allotments on three sites and manages two other sites for TDC. For rental fees and further details, contact the Assistant Town Clerk, Eileen Richford (eileen.richford@ramsgatetc.org.uk).

Importance: Medium

Responsibility: RTC

Timescale: On going

7th : Twinning events

RTC organises and funds twinning events with other Mayors in Kent, London and Conflans in France. Details available from The Mayor/Deputy Mayor via the Mayor's Administrative Assistant (emma.brett@ramsgatetc.org.uk)

Importance: Low

Responsibility: RTC

Timescale: On going

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Ramsgate Town Council staff:

Richard Styles : Town Clerk (richard.styles@ramsgatetc.org.uk)

Eileen Richford : Assistant Town Clerk (eileen.richford@ramsgatetc.org.uk)

Dean Williams : Technical Officer (dean.williams@ramsgatetc.org.uk)

Emma Brett : Mayor of Ramsgate's Personal Assistant (emma.brett@ramsgatetc.org.uk)

Local Authority structure in Kent:

Ramsgate Town Council : Responsible for upkeep of Christmas lights, allotments, some flower beds, Visitor Information Centre.

Thanet District Council : responsible for recycling/rubbish collections, planning and licensing applications, Environmental Health, building control and enforcement, council housing.

Kent County Council : responsible for large-scale planning applications, highway maintenance, schools, social services.

Please note that all RTC Councillors' contact details are to be found on the RTC website at: www.ramsgatetown.org or in the Community Ad Magazine.

There are seven Wards in Ramsgate: Central Harbour Ward, Eastcliff Ward, Montefiore Ward, Nethercourt Ward, Newington Ward, Northwood Ward and Pegwell Ward.

The Town Plan does contain proposals which RTC is not directly responsible for, but all issues will be identified and raised by RTC with the appropriate Local Authority.

Cllr Corinna Huxley, RTC Chair of Planning (March 2015)