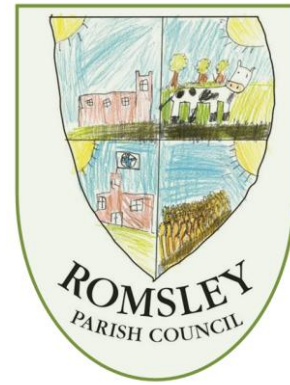


Romsley Parish Council Community Pledges

(Adopted May 2015)



1) We will always operate a transparent and consultative Parish Council - We will be clear and open about the decisions we make and actively seek to understand and reflect the views of everyone in the Parish.

- We will develop a new Parish website.
- We will ensure all council business is recorded properly and we will publish the minutes of all meetings and records of all decisions on the Parish Council website.
- We will distribute all official records of meetings and decisions, to those residents who request them, by e-mail.
- We will introduce the use of on-line referendum* so you can provide us with an input to key issues.
- We will improve the Parish Council notice boards.
- We will hold a community forum, open to all, annually.
- We will produce a regular newsletter for all residents.
- We will develop a comprehensive Parish Plan that details the services and improvements we want to see delivered during the next 5 years, the contents of which we will use to lobby and provide evidence to decision makers and fund holders.
- We will review this Parish Plan annually and consult residents on its contents.

2) We will provide a strong and unified voice for Romsley Parish - We will stand up to the County and District Councils to defend our amenities and public services from further austerity cuts.

- We will represent the Parish in a firm but collaborative manner with key decision makers.
- We will represent all parts of the Parish equally and will not focus solely on issues in the main village.
- We will maintain effective relationships with the District and County Councils as well as other key stakeholders.
- We will never sacrifice our long term relationships with key decision making bodies for short term political point scoring.
- We will strive to achieve the very best deal we can get for all of Romsley Parish.

3) We will be accountable to you for our spend - We will maximise the value we obtain from every pound of your money.

- We will publish detailed accounts every 6 months on the Parish Council website.
- We will distribute accounts, to those residents who request them, by e-mail.
- Our accounts will be open and transparent. They will accurately show each line of income and each item of spend with clear information detailing who the beneficiaries of this spend were and the services obtained for the money spent.
- We will always undertake fair and open competitions for the goods and services we buy.
- Where value and competition permits, we will utilise suppliers of services from within the parish.

4) We recognise the importance of safe and serviceable roads - We will work with the Worcestershire Safer Roads Partnership, the Local Authorities and the Police to improve road safety and maintain the condition of roads and pavements across the Parish.

- As part of the Parish Plan we will include a dedicated section on Road Safety and Road Improvements, we will lobby for the relevant authorities to formally sign up to this plan and hold them to account for its delivery.
- We will work with the relevant authorities to introduce traffic calming measures such as electronic speed indicator signs at appropriate locations on the Bromsgrove Road and Dark Lane through the village, along Day House Bank and around the junction between the Bromsgrove Road and Day House Bank (The Manchester Inn junction).
- We will work with the Police to ensure that frequent speed enforcement initiatives are undertaken, especially in and around the School and at the Day House Bank & Bromsgrove Road junction.
- We will lobby Worcestershire County Council for a proper crossing by the school.
- We will work collaboratively with all the shops and affected residents to find and implement a sustainable solution the parking issues at the shops. We want to find the best solution for all those directly affected and for the wider community who need good access to these important Parish facilities. We will examine all options including but not solely the creation of additional parking bays, road layout modification and changes to road markings.
- In the first year we will undertake an audit of critical road and pavement defects in the Parish and lobby the County Council to address these as a priority. After this we will continue to monitor the condition of the roads and pavements across the Parish and where appropriate we will lobby the County Council to undertake repairs that are quick and effective.

5) We will help build a safe community - We will work with West Mercia Police to get visible and effective Policing across the Parish; we will also look to restart our Neighbourhood Watch.

- If it is affordable, we will provide direct funding from the Parish Council budget to pay for the Neighbourhood watch.
- We will meet frequently with the Police to make sure that Romsley receives its fair share of Police time and resources.
- We will invite the Police to attend the annual community forum meeting to hear and discuss those issues which are of concern to parish residents.
- Within the Parish Plan we will include a section on Policing, in which we will identify any specific improvements that are required to reduce crime and improve safety in the community.

6) We will treat planning and development seriously - We will approach all planning matters in a fair and transparent way.

- We will do all we can to defend the Parish from inappropriate development and work with neighbouring Parishes to protect the surrounding Green Belt.
- We will talk to all parties who are affected by planning proposals in an open and transparent way.
- We will seek to support the desires of individuals but protect the interests of the wider community.
- We want any developments to be sympathetic to our Parish and its environment.
- We will represent the contents of this consultation to the relevant planning authorities with a strong and unified voice.

7) We will organise a diverse and appropriate range of community events - We will hold an open dialogue with everyone in the Parish about the types of public events you want to see held.

- We want to build on the success of Romstock and will support this festival in 2015 if finances and resources permit.
- We would like to see a diverse range of Parish events that appeals to all ages and encourages a strong sense of community.
- These events could include a Village Festival, an annual Fireworks event or open air theatre productions as well as continuing with live music events. There are many potential ideas however, before proceeding, we will open a full dialogue with the community and offer residents choices on this through on-line referendum* and at the annual community forum.
- Village events are a valuable source of income and we pledge that all proceeds from these public events will be distributed amongst worthy community causes in our Parish. We also pledge to be fully transparent on all spend and revenue generated around these events.

8) We will support our young people, our families and our older citizens - We will do all we can to support our school, our nurseries, our child minders, our carers as well as those clubs and societies dedicated to our young people and our older citizens.

- We will establish a Future Generations Fund from which any organisation or group within the parish that works with children and young people can apply for small discretionary grants to support their work.
- We will establish a Community Support Fund from which organisations serving adults and our older citizens can apply for small grants to help fund special projects and activities.
- We will maintain an effective dialogue with the School and we will work with them to secure additional funding and obtain additional resources from local and National Government as well as other support bodies.
- We will work with the School to create an elected Junior Parish Council so our young people gain a stronger sense of citizenship and feel more involved in our community. We will seek to understand their views by asking the Junior Parish Council to present to the main Council every 3 months with their thoughts and ideas.

9) We will protect the environment that surrounds our Parish - Our rural location and the countryside that surrounds us is something to protect and treasure.

- We will work with the district and county councils as well as the National Trust to protect the countryside within the Parish.
- We will instigate an annual "Parish clean up" event where we will ask community volunteers to help us pick up litter from the roads, lanes and hedgerows across the Parish.
- We will look to increase the number of litter bins around the village and wider parish.
- Each year we will look to plant 30 broad leaf trees or plants that are natural to this area. We will work with the community to identify areas for these trees to be planted and we will involve our young citizens from the school in this project. We hope that every child passing through the school will get to plant and nurture one of these trees thereby strengthening their bonds to our Parish and the rural area in which we live.

10) We will do all we can to support the businesses that operate within the Parish - Our businesses play a vital role in our Parish and our community.

- Within the bounds of availability, value for money and open procurement rules, we will seek to buy all our goods and services from business located within the Parish.
- We will hold an annual business forum, to hear from and consult with, the Parish business community.
- We will work with the Business Community to lobby and represent their needs with local and national enterprise bodies.

11) We will enhance the open and community spaces in the parish so they are safe and pleasant environments for our families - The village has several open spaces which are important focal points for the Parish.

- We will increase the number of benches and seating areas in the open areas.
- We will look to increase the number of ornamental plants and flowers to improve the ambiance of the Parish.
- We will consult with the community and explore possible locations for a village flagpole and memorial area.
- We will re-examine the plans for installing a permanent stage or band stand area in the park as well as explore the practical issues around installing toilet facilities. We will report the findings of this to the community and will hold an on-line referendum* before any choices are made.
- We will identify and approach organisations who provide additional funding to pay for these improvements.
- We will repaint the play equipment and ensure that the safety ground covering surrounding the play equipment is replaced.

12) We will look to bring in additional funding for the parish from National Government grants and organisations such as the Big Lottery Fund. - Several organisations are willing to provide substantial amounts of money to community projects.

- We will look to fund significant improvements to Parish amenities by approaching relevant funding bodies.
- We will lobby local and national government to secure better funding for the Parish.
- We will not spend money we do not have nor will we place excessive demand of the Parish precept.

13) We will defend the services available within the Parish and lobby for them to be improved. - Good public services and effective utilities are the life blood of any community.

- We will work with the County Council to defend the bus service to the village and ensure the timetable is adequate for all our resident's needs.
- We will work constructively with Seven Trent Water to minimise the disruption caused to residents by the building of the new water pipeline that will supplement the Elan Valley Aqueduct. This is due to commence building in 2017 and will pass through our Parish. We will monitor and challenge Severn Trent to help ensure that the environment is returned to normal after the works are completed.
- We will lobby for faster Broadband speeds to be rolled out to the Parish as quickly as possible.
- We will act as single voice for the parish with regard to the Electricity, Gas, Telecoms, Drainage and Water companies to help ensure the services we get are reliable and fit for purpose.

* on-line referendum refer to the use of public surveys which the Parish Council will use to help inform its decision making, they will not hold the status of official referendum and will not carry any legal precedence.