

# Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum

A new town forum for the **unparished parts of the borough (Royal Tunbridge Wells and Rusthall)** is tentatively taking its first steps. The forum, which aims to draw together residents' representatives to work together with the Council and other bodies to address issues in the town, had its first meeting in **July** and is due to hold its second as we go to print.

Early on its agenda were proposals to work with the Council on a pilot scheme given the working title 'open spaces.' Members looked at a number of parts of the town looking shabby or vandalised and discussed what powers the Council has in caring for public areas and for working with commercial and private property owners to bring about improvements.

Gary Stevenson, the Council's Head of Environmental Services, said he would welcome the forum's involvement in a pilot project to tackle graffiti, disrepair and a general lack of cleanliness. The forum could help the Council by establishing acceptable standards for the area and by bringing the Council's attention to offending areas. The Council was already in the process of recruiting Grimebusters, but Gary said he wanted to pilot new ways of working to improve inspection reporting and joint working with other agencies. If the pilot proves successful in the town then the programme might be rolled out to other parts of the borough within the next three years.

The forum is in the process of prioritising topics it can work with the Council on and is open to new members. If you represent a residents' association or other body representing Royal Tunbridge Wells residents and would like to find out more, we'd like to hear from you.

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