

Press release, 19 October 2020

## **Start of renovation work at Rapperswil-Jona Youth Hostel**

**Despite the current challenges in tourism, the Rapperswil-Jona Youth Hostel is undergoing renovation in the coming months. This is intended to increase the number of overnight stays in future and maintain the range of affordable and family-friendly accommodation options in the long term. The focus of the renovation work is on updating the public areas and providing barrier-free access to the rooms.**

Another property of the Swiss Youth Hostels (SYH) network is being modernised: the youth hostel in Rapperswil-Jona. Originally built in the 1960s as a retirement home, the building was converted into a youth hostel in 1991. The building is to be modernised and adapted to the requirements of today's guests. The inhabitants of Rapperswil-Jona voted to approve the building loan totalling CHF 2.5 million at the town meeting on 5 September 2019, and the renovation work at the youth hostel is about to begin.

For the town of Rapperswil-Jona, refurbishment of the youth hostel is an investment in the future: "On the one hand, modernisation of the hostel may help counteract the current decline in overnight stays and maintain the range of affordable and family-friendly accommodation options in the long term. On the other hand, the youth hostel generates added value – not only for the town, but for the entire region," says Thomas Furrer, the city councillor in charge. The town also attaches great importance to the seasonal business model of the hostel, allowing it to be additionally used in winter as accommodation for schoolchildren, as well as for sports and project camps. Cooperation in the sports sector is to be stepped up in particular, due to the hostel's proximity to local sports facilities and the generally high affinity for sports in the region.

### **Focus on public areas and barrier-free access to guest rooms**

In the coming months, the rooms on the first and second floors are being refurbished and equipped with new furnishings as part of what is known as a 'soft' renovation. On both floors there will now be a double room with bathroom (shower/WC), two family rooms (one double bed and one bunk bed plus shower/WC), as well as a four-bed room with two bunk beds (no bathroom). On the first floor, the double room has barrier-free access. In addition, the first floor will have wheelchair-accessible sanitary facilities with shower/WC. The public areas such as the foyer, dining room and the seminar room in the basement are also being renovated and modernised. The heart of the reception area is going to be the new foyer, and this will also feature an open reception counter. Considerable effort is required to adapt the building in line with the fire protection regulations. Various components such as concrete ceilings, walls and partitioning need to be replaced or provided with cladding.

"We're pleased we are still able to further modernise and extend our network despite the current challenges. The fact that the Rapperswil-Jona Youth Hostel can be adapted to the requirements of today's guests and made barrier-free gives us confidence for the future", says Janine Bunte, CEO of Swiss Youth Hostels. The reopening of the Rapperswil-Jona Youth Hostel is scheduled for the start of the season on 30 April 2021.

**Swiss Youth Hostels**

The Swiss Youth Hostels Association operates a network of 52 hostels, consisting of 46 of its own establishments and 6 franchise businesses, ranging from romantic castles to metropolitan designer locations and wellness hostels. The focus of the non-profit organisation, which has approximately 73,000 members, is on quality-conscious, sustainable and affordable youth and family tourism. In 2019, its operations generated a total of 736,511 overnight stays. [www.youthhostel.ch](http://www.youthhostel.ch)

**For further information:****Swiss Youth Hostels**

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