

From the Editor

2014 has been an interesting and challenging year for the Trust. We started the year on a low note with no progress to report on the Assize Courts and the fear that our planning system was broken and needed fixing. Our Chairman, Ted East, announced that he would not be standing for election and again would also be leaving the Committee.

We were unable to find a replacement for Ted so we decided to introduce a system based on a 'rotating' Chairman. This has worked surprisingly well, with a monthly change of responsibility. It has been 'business as usual' and the Committee has worked together to make sure that we have contributed and responded to community issues as they have risen.

At the beginning of June, we hosted the Great Parking Debate. The event was well attended and the discussion lively. The outcome was a report to the Town Council which summarised the views of members. We were pleased to announce that John Girvan, a Trust member right from the beginning, was presented with a civic award in recognition of his work on the WWII pillbox at Rotherstone. We also reported on the improvements to the cycle path and lighting on the Green.

In August, we learned that the planning application for the development of St Mary's Church has been rejected again at the appeal stage. This was disappointing, given the community support for the project, but the St Mary's team remain confident that the development will go ahead in the end.

From Coate Bridge...

A win for localism as the Secretary of State rejects the developers' appeal - but there are more battles on the horizon

Following the appeal by the developers in April this year and the planning enquiry which took place in April 2014, Eric Pickles, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, called in the Planning Inspector's report for review. The Secretary of State had made the decision to call in this report in advance of the enquiry taking place and it was clear that the Mactaggart & Mickel appeal would be an important test case in the Neighbourhood Planning process. Four other applications which had been the subject of appeals were also called in by the Secretary of State - the application from developers White Lion Land for 77 new homes in Malmesbury and three schemes in West Sussex. Three of these have been refused with one in West Sussex been upheld.

Mr Pickle's verdict was finally published at the end of October, having originally been promised for the end of August. Whilst this delay has been frustrating, it was worth the wait. Every aspect of the Inspector's report has been weighed up as the impact of this decision and the precedent it sets across the country will be very significant. It has shown that having local plans developed by

local people can have a considerable impact in the planning process. We have made our voices heard with everyone working together to the same goal. In this case, the community as a whole, including Claire Perry MP, our county and town councillors, the members of the Neighbourhood Planning team and all those who took part in the consultation process, have delivered a successful result.

However, there is still an opportunity for Mactaggart & Mickel to appeal against this decision through the Judicial Review process so we are not completely out of the woods yet. They will be continuing to monitor the development of the Devizes Neighbourhood Plan to identify any changes which might favour a fresh application being submitted. The Plan has not yet been signed off and comments can be submitted until 27 November. This can either be done online here

<http://tinyurl.com/DevizesNP>

or on a representation form available at Devizes Library or the Wiltshire Council office in Snuff Street.

John Baumber
Trustee

...to Quakers Walk

Just before going to press, we learned that an exhibition had been staged setting out plans for change of use of the field off Quakers Walk, south of the housing development.

In November 2012, the Planning Inspector upheld the appeal by St Monica's Trust against the rejection by Wiltshire Council of the application for a Care Village. It now seems that St Monica's has been unable to sell the land with planning

permission and is instead developing a proposal to build 125 houses.

The exhibition revealed a lack of understanding of the traffic implications of such a development and of the other infrastructure issues to be resolved. The revised planning application is expected to be submitted in the next 3 months and the Trust will comment as appropriate.

From the Editor

continued

September saw the second Devizes Heritage Open Day take place at an increased number of venues, with a last chance to see Wyndhams before the building was returned to private accommodation. Over 100 people, many of them ex-pupils, visited. A happy day with a tinge of sadness at the end of an era.

The year got even better in October with the fantastic news that the development of 350 homes at Coate Bridge would not be going ahead thanks to the decision by Secretary of State Eric Pickles to go against the recommendation of the Planning Inspector. A major factor in that decision was the fact that Devizes has a Neighbourhood Plan in place, thanks to the hard work of Rick Rowlands and his team. More news about this elsewhere in this edition.

Overall, a good year for Devizes!

Philippa Morgan

Consultations

Have your say

Wiltshire Council is consulting on the Devizes Area Neighbourhood Plan, which was cited by the Secretary of State in his rejection of the Coate Bridge appeal.

The consultation lasts until 27th November, so you will just have time to review it and make comments. Plans and forms are available to inspect at the library, and council offices in Devizes and Trowbridge. Or visit the web page:

<http://tinyurl.com/DevizesNP>

The Trust's response is available on our website

The Council are also inviting comments on proposals to change the way that car parking is administered throughout the county.

The consultation for Devizes can be found online at

<http://tinyurl.com/DevizesParking>

- and is open until 16th January.

Moving With The Times

Tony Sedgwick describes our new web page and interface

It's fair to say that the modern world has been transformed by the internet, in ways that no-one could have foreseen twenty years ago.

How does this affect the Trust? Firstly we need to make sure that our name and our activities are "out there" for everyone who might have an interest in what we are doing. Secondly we need to allow new members to sign up and pay immediately, without the hassle of completing a Standing Order form and then remembering to post it! Thirdly, we need to ensure that our site can be viewed on different types of device, particularly smart phones and the new generation of "tablets". The latest figures show that 34% of smart-phone owners preferred access to the web is via their phone, not their computer.

Another key factor is the ease with which the site can be updated. If it relies on one person and requires computer skills, things tend to drag and sites get out of date, which is a problem with our present site.

In the next few months we will be moving to a new web site, one which will meet these basic requirements and, in addition will do more to assist your committee in the management of the Trust. As it happens, four years ago my younger daughter set up a company to provide sports clubs with just such a solution. Now with 200 clubs using her ClubBuzz system, she is launching a similar product for all types of groups. Known as GroupBuzz, the full product will be launched next spring. Given my

close association with ClubBuzz, your committee has agreed to become an early user and we should be switching over in January. The advantage to the Trust is that we get free use of the site for three years and the advantage to the company is that they get early feedback of any problems. We will also play a part in shaping the product so it works well for the Trust and therefore for similar organisations.

Some of you will know we have been doing some early testing when the registration system inadvertently sent out emails. I apologise for that, it should not have happened, but it did!

If all goes to plan, members of the committee will be able to contribute to the site directly, meaning it will be updated far more frequently. The membership records will be held on the site so that members will be able to pay their subs by internet transfer, new members will be able to enrol and pay on the site and members will be able to update their personal details.

All this will be done without those details being available to anyone but you and the Trust's committee. The site will be accessible and readable whatever device is used to access it, an important feature if the Trust is to recruit from the younger generation.

Two local organisations already use the ClubBuzz system - you can view them at www.devizesnetball.org.uk and www.holtbowls.co.uk

Heritage Open Day

A letter from one of this year's participants

Dear Philippa,

Just a short note to let you know that the day went very well. Not as many visitors as last year (about 135) but I didn't really expect to have as many as last year, which was the first time the Lodge has been opened for ages. Everybody who visited seemed very interested and we received many positive comments, on the Building itself but also with regard to Freemasonry and the fact that we seem more open about what we do these days.

Some of the comment in our visitors' book:

'A hidden world explained' 'Lovely lodge-Lovely welcome', 'Wonderful - all members so helpful', 'Transparency is a wonderful thing!'

I am pleased to say there were no adverse comments at all. Very many thanks for asking us to participate again, it was a most enjoyable and fruitful day. I know that our members very much enjoyed it and from the comments above so did our visitors!

Very best regards

Bill Hicks, *Secretary of the Wiltshire Lodge of Fidelity No 663*

The Devizes Campus

In October Cllr Nigel Carter, chairman of the Devizes Campus Development Team, gave a presentation at the Town Hall describing the campus concept, and reporting on progress. Here he summarises the main points.

With the creation of the new unitary authority, Wiltshire Council in 2009, the consolidation of the assets of four district councils and the old county council was a formidable task. Large numbers of older council assets became redundant, and the opportunity arose for consolidating key activities in three hubs – Salisbury, Chippenham and Trowbridge – and dispensing with listed, elderly and other high cost assets.

However, with this change came the realisation that many council services were inaccessible to parts of the community, and that there was an imbalance in the provision of leisure and library facilities. The “campus” was born to correct this.

The campus is intended to bring those council services most keenly needed locally – housing and other benefits, access to planning documentation, registration of births and deaths – together with leisure, library and community and voluntary services into a single entity, although not necessarily a single site!

So far fifteen locations have been designated across the county as centres for campus development. They are to be introduced progressively, with Devizes currently scheduled for completion in 2016-2017.

The first task for the Shadow Campus Operations Board (SCOB in Wiltshire Council parlance!) – designated the Devizes Campus Development Team (DCDT) locally – was a community-wide consultation on what the public felt was most important to them. One ‘off-the-wall’ request was for an ice rink!

However, for the majority, a central location was preferred but, in addition to the conventional services and facilities proposed, a specific request was made for ‘improved medical provision’.

The DCDT also identified and consulted with some forty council, community and voluntary services

sector providers about their enthusiasm for and potential use of a campus facility. The town already has, of course, a very active library with complementary mobile services for the community area and a modern leisure centre, although public access to the latter is compromised during working hours because of the use of pool and sports hall by community schools.

Their responses were largely positive and the broad expectation is for a campus which will embrace the current leisure centre, may consolidate the library facility in a different location and would offer a range of services as well as access to multi-use space, consulting / counselling rooms, some additional fitness / therapeutic facilities, a training pool, as well as IT and other ‘signposting’ services.

The response from local general practices regarding potential medical provision has been limited to the possibility of locating some counselling services in the campus. The DCDT has proposed the provision of a ‘docking facility’ to enable itinerant services such as breast cancer and retinal screening for diabetics to be located temporarily.

The DCDT will be undertaking another round of consultation to ensure that its proposals continue to enjoy support before formalising its business plan for the consideration of Wiltshire Council’s cabinet, in mid-2015. Subject to the confirmation of funding and the necessary administrative support from Council officers, it is hoped that construction might begin in early-2016.

Much will depend upon the choice of a site! Currently, two are under consideration – the site of the Borough Police Station, between New Park Street and the Wharf, and a greenfield site adjacent to Devizes School –but the final decision is by no means certain.

Museum News

A selection of forthcoming events

NOVEMBER

Saturday, 22nd at 9:30 am
RAILWAY CONFERENCE

An all day event with lectures on the archaeology of railway, the early day of the Great Western Railway and more. £17 (mems £15) **BOOKING ESSENTIAL**

Saturday, 22nd at 2:30 pm

LECTURE: *Neolithic Houses and Settlement at Kingsmead Quarry, Berkshire*

a Saturday afternoon lecture by Alistair Barclay. The discovery of three timber houses at Kingsmead Quarry, Horton provides a unique opportunity to learn more about the earliest permanent settlements.

Saturday 29th at 2:30 pm

LECTURE: *Building Neolithic Houses at the Stonehenge Visitor Centre*

A Saturday lecture by Luke Winter, Manager of the Ancient Technology Centre.

DECEMBER

Saturday, 6th at 2:30 pm

LECTURE: *The Romano-British Cemeteries at Amesbury Down*
by Jackie McKinley.

Saturday, 13th at 10:15

YOUNG WANHS: Visit to the Conservation labs at the Wiltshire History Centre

Young WANHS is a Saturday morning club for 7 to 14 year olds interested in archaeology and history. Held on the second Saturday of the month from 10.15am to 12.15pm, pre-booking is essential.

Saturday, 18th April 2015

Archaeology in Wiltshire Conference 2015

The third Archaeology in Wiltshire Conference, being

Continued overleaf

Museum News

continued

held on UNESCO World Heritage Day.

Monday Closure - January to Easter

The Museum will be closed to the public on Mondays from January to Easter 2015 to allow essential behind the scenes work to take place

Bookings and enquiries:
www.wiltshiremuseum.org.uk
Or call 01380 727369



The towpath at the rear of the new McCarthy and Stone development

Another Trust campaign

As part of the Wharf development, Wiltshire Council's intention was to reinstate the towpath on the southern side of the canal between the wharf and Town Bridge. This has yet to happen, and there seems to be no coordinated approach.

The Trust will be taking this up as an issue in 2015. More details in the next *Trust News*.



www.trustfordevizes.info

A date for your diary

Christmas Social

Friday 5th December at 7:30pm at the Museum

There will be refreshments and seasonal entertainment by the Devizes Singers. All members are welcome to join us.

Assize Courts - Too Little, Too Late?



Two recent views of the Assize Court building



photos: Philippa Morgan

Those of you who drive or walk past the Assize Courts regularly will have noticed that scaffolding has been erected at the front of the building. This does not, however, indicate that the housing development is starting. This was the reply from Councillor Sue Evans to my recent e-mail:

"Wiltshire Council have been working with the owners of the Assizes Courts, and the owners have agreed to do some repairs to

the Assizes Courts. Gaiger Brothers have been contracted to do the work."

As can be seen in the photos, many of the stones at the front of the building are crumbling and the fabric of the building is in a very sad state. If Wiltshire Council are indeed working with the owners, they will hopefully be able to start on the housing development before the building becomes uneconomical to repair. *Philippa Morgan*

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I was interested to read Tony Sedgwick's item about Sir Alan Cobham.

I was responsible for suggesting his name for a street name when I was a Town Councillor.

I think I gave him his proper title but unfortunately the Sir has been dropped. Also I hoped the Council would apply it to a street nearer to the field where he

held his Air Displays at what we knew as Gypsy Patch, now Windsor Drive.

As schoolboys we wouldn't miss these annual displays which offered flights over Devizes for ten shillings (50 pence in today's money) but for most of us this was more than we could afford.

I appreciate the Devizes Trust News.
Hugh Burn

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