

From the Editor

We're very pleased that the Trust is now working with the Town Council on a project which will lead to the restoration of faded and damaged road signs. We have also been in touch with Wiltshire Council about the new, much larger signs outside the White Bear and we are hoping that the hanging sign will be reinstated. Your Committee aims to be vigilant but we always appreciate it when members bring issues to our attention so that we can pursue them appropriately.

I am sorry to report that David Dawson and John Baumber have resigned as Trustees since the 2016 AGM. We would like to thank them both for the terrific support they have given the Trust over the last few years and wish them well. This does mean that we now have two vacancies on our committee. We would welcome members with an interest in heritage and planning issues who would like to get involved. Please contact Tony Duck if you would like to find out more about the role.

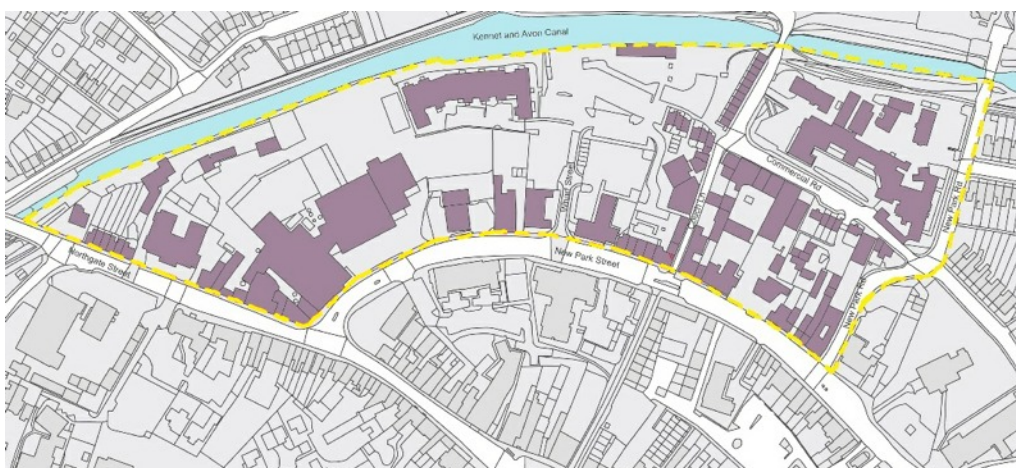
We are still awaiting the outcome of the Planning Inspector's enquiry into the Coate Bridge planning appeal. This appears to have been affected by the change in Government and, as yet, no date has been given for the Inspector's report.

Tony Duck reports that every time he sends out an email to members, some are returned as wrongly addressed and some declined for unspecified reasons. Could I please ask members to visit our website, log in and check the accuracy of their membership data.

It would also be helpful if you added the Trust's e-mail addresses to your "whitelist" so that any e-mails from the Trust aren't rejected by your system's spam filter:

Devizes Wharf Is Back on the Agenda

Plans are being discussed for this vital part of the Town Centre



The area under discussion is marked in yellow above, and now includes the Assize Courts (left) and the Hospital (on the right)

Devizes Wharf is an important part of the town's history. The opening of the Kennet & Avon Canal in 1810 brought new trade to the town and opened up new markets for its products. The Trust was pleased to work with Wiltshire Council in 2011 and a design brief was prepared.

We were able to establish a number of principles for the future of the Wharf which were enshrined in the Draft Planning Brief. However, although the Brief was included in the Core Strategy for Wiltshire, to date there has been no further progress.

We can now report that Wiltshire Council is working on a Development Brief which will provide high level guidance for future development of the Wharf. The Brief will be based on the work undertaken in 2011, and will complement the existing Core Strategy and Neighbourhood Plan. The intention is to enhance what is already in place and provide a framework for further development.

The Trust was invited to attend a "stakeholders consultation" at the Wharf Theatre on 11th August. The main discussion point was the widening of the area to be involved in the next stage of planning. We intend to participate fully in ensuring that the Development Brief meets the needs of the town as well as offering space for commercial activity and becoming a more attractive area for tourists and visitors to the town.

The 2011 Draft Brief specified that:

- The existing buildings should be an intrinsic part of the site
- Any area currently used for public events should remain open
- Any new buildings should be small and focused on units for artisans to ply their trade, thereby attracting more visitors
- A cafe or restaurant should be encouraged
- Toilets available to the public should be a priority
- Any new building on or in the vicinity of the Wharf will have to meet strict guidelines so they do not intrude on the historic site.

The Trust Committee will now review these points to ensure that they are still relevant to the needs of the town. Comments from members would be welcomed.

A further development is that Wiltshire Council is now including the Hospital and the Assize Courts sites within the development framework. See plans above.

We have been told that there will be an opportunity for the public to comment on proposals in due course. We will keep you informed on progress.

From the editor

continued

info@trustfordevizes.info and
tonyduckworton@aol.com.

Our website is full of information which is updated regularly, but only a small number of our members have ever visited the site. The address is <http://www.trustfordevizes.info>

Philippa Morgan

The Trust Members' meeting -7th July 2016

About three dozen members gathered at The Wiltshire Museum to listen to the Director, David Dawson, talk about the Lacock Cup. He told us the history of such objects and explained that there were not many in existence now because some had been melted down and others hidden at times of religious upheaval and not discovered again. Nobody is certain where the Lacock Cup originated or how it came to be in St. Cyriac's church at Lacock. It dates from the fifteenth century and was bought in 2013 for £1.3 million, this sum being raised by various bodies contributing towards the total. More information is available on the website for the British Museum. It is a very fine example of such an object and remarkably still has its lid.

After the talk we were able to view the cup in its secure display case. The Wiltshire Museum is supposed to share the cup for display purposes on a six-monthly basis with the British Museum but it cannot come to Devizes again until we have our own display case, which will cost a considerable sum of money. It is hoped that a replica of the cup will be made, but it will not be an easy task! The original was made from 2 kilos of silver together with some other metal to decorate the edges of the lid and the foot. It is quite breath-taking when you first see it with light reflecting from it.

Members were also able to see the current exhibition "Wiltshire's Story In One Hundred Objects" which was fascinating, but everyone agreed that the Lacock Cup was the star of the show.

Inez Skinner

The White Bear

John Girvan comments on the recent change to the pub's signage



Above, the original signs. Below, the new ones. Pictures: John Girvan



The traditional old pub sign has been dropped and lost from an early Tudor Pub in Devizes. The White Bear in Monday Market Street, one of the oldest market areas in Devizes. Wadsworth have revamped the White Bear giving it an inappropriate modern plastic image by dropping its traditional pictorial pub sign. According to their visitor information centre it may be used for another pub out of town.

Wadsworth's own tourist leaflet recognises the importance of traditional signs, saying "once a pub has lost its pictorial sign a part of history is lost forever. Wadsworth still upholds the unique British tradition

of producing hand-painted pictorial signs for most of their public houses, as opposed to simple lettering or a lacklustre corporate uniformity." They have now deliberately ignored this and have gone against their own policy!

The new lettered sign is made of GRP fibre glass instead of traditional wood. Thankfully, traditional signs are still used in other pubs in town, notably the Black Swan and the Pelican.

The Trust has raised this issue with the Planning Enforcement Office at Wiltshire Council, and we await a response.

The Trust - getting results

The Trust's involvement in refurbishing street nameplates

In the last issue of The Trust Newsletter, we drew attention to the poor state of many of the street nameplates in the town. Responsibility for these important historical features really rests with Wiltshire Council but they claim that they have no budget for the task.

The Town Council has agreed to work with the Trust to carry out this important work whilst still seeking some financial input from Wiltshire Council

The Trust has offered to contribute £1500 towards a scheme to carry out a survey to establish the extent of the problem. This contribution will be used to carry out an audit of the signs within the Conservation Area and take down and restore six signs. This will establish the likely extent and cost of the work needed and enable this sum to be included in the 2017-2018 Town Council Budget. To those unfamiliar with local government finances this may seem long winded, but it does ensure that there will be no sudden rises in Council Tax.

Why are these signs important? Don't we all know where we are? Two recent independent national surveys have listed Devizes as an attractive market town worth visiting. The magazine Country Life recently published a two page illustrated article on a visit to the town: although its circulation is small, it is one of those magazines found in

dentists' waiting rooms and doctors' surgeries years after publication.

Tourism makes an important contribution to the town's economy and helps maintain the independent shops and services which provide employment and support for facilities which locals also need and enjoy. Visitors need to use street signs to reach their destinations and, if they can't make out the street signs, it will give a bad impression of our town.

On the wider issue of who does what, the Town Council is negotiating with Wiltshire Council to take over a number of services which might otherwise be lost. This has included the management of the public toilets which were in danger of being closed as an economy measure. Many neighbouring towns have not taken this enlightened view. By better management this has enabled the neglected facility on The Green to be refurbished and re-opened and managed by the same two staff who formerly serviced only the unit in the West Central carpark. Its proximity to The Crammer and the children's play area has already proved popular with local families and passing visitors. Part of the building has also been turned into "The Tuck Box" selling ice cream, confectionery and drinks, during the school holidays and other peak times. An added bonus!

Planning Issues - Quakers Walk

A controversial plan just won't go away

The revised application for 123 dwellings on land off Quakers Walk, originally intended to be the site of the Primary Care Centre, was 'called in' by the Secretary of State in January 2016. The inquiry, which is scheduled to last for three days is to be held on 25 October 2016 at 10am at The Wessex Room, The Corn Exchange, Market Place, Devizes, SN10 1HS.

A new planning application has now been submitted by the owners, the Merchant Venturers, for the same piece of land. This application is for 65 dwellings on the northern half of the field. For those familiar with the Devizes Area Plan, you will

remember that "All proposals for residential development should be limited to clusters of no more than 65 dwellings." So, the cynical amongst us would suggest that this is a deliberate move to confuse or confound the planning system.

The date for submitting comments on this particular application has now passed, but you can look at the documents and comments on the Wiltshire Council Planning portal:

http://planning.wiltshire.gov.uk/No_rthgate/PlanningExplorer/ApplicationSearch.aspx

The reference number is 16/05341/OUT.

Museum News

A selection of forthcoming events

SATURDAY LECTURE: Exploring Avebury

2:30 pm, Saturday, 24 September, 2016

An illustrated talk by Steve Marshall.

Saturday afternoon lectures start at 2.30pm and last approx. one hour.

LECTURE: Finding Pitt-Rivers Project

2:30 pm, Saturday, 01 October, 2016

By Jane Ellis-Schön, Project Curator at Salisbury Museum. *Booking essential.*

CONFERENCE: Roads and Transport - the 2016 Industrial Archaeology Conference

Saturday, 29 October, 2016

The theme for this year's Industrial Archaeology Conference is Roads and Transport. The venue for the Conference will be Devizes Town Hall.

LECTURE: The Roman Antikythera Shipwreck

2:30 pm, Saturday, 3 December, 2016

Searching, finding, survey and excavation. By Phil Short. *Booking essential.*

EXHIBITIONS

Vale of Pewsey Project: between Stonehenge and Avebury

July to September 2016

A special display including finds from last season's excavation.

Commemorating the Battle of the Somme

August to November 2016

Guest curated by Richard Broadhead

Fantastic Fossils

August 2016 to early 2017

A fun exhibition for all the family.

Bookings and enquiries:
www.wiltshiremuseum.org.uk

Or call 01380 727369

Weeding and Litter

Caring for the local environment

Devizes now has a group called CURDS (Clean Up Roundway and Devizes) organised by Zena Robson. The group picks up and disposes of litter as well as weeding and pruning borders and beds throughout town. You might have seen them around wearing blue tabards.

The group is always looking for people to join them. If you are interested in getting involved, contact Zena on 01380 738582 or by e-mail:

zena.robson@btinternet.com.

For more on the subject of litter, take a look at this article on the BBC website:

<http://tinyurl.com/litter2016>

If you have any ideas about what else could be done to clear up litter in Devizes, please let your committee know.

Write for Trust News!

We are always on the lookout for interesting articles about Devizes and its history. Do you have something to offer?

Perhaps you have a question that our local experts can answer, or a comment on one of our stories.

Write to the editor at the address below.

Are you online?

Would you prefer to receive your Trust News by email?

Printing and posting the Trust News is one of the major costs incurred by the Trust.

If you would be happy to receive your copy of Trust News by email, it would help to reduce our outgoings, saving paper as well as the time spent by our volunteers stuffing envelopes!

To register for this service, please send an email to info@trustfordevizes.info.

Dates for your diary

Devizes Heritage Open Day will be on Saturday 10th September. A leaflet with a street plan and details of the open buildings is enclosed.

The Wiltshire Buildings Record is holding its annual Study Day "If the Walls Could Talk..." on Saturday 15th October at Market Lavington Community Hall, starting at 10.30 am. More details are available on the Trust website

The next Members' meeting will be at the Town Hall on Friday 21st October, 7:00pm for a prompt start at 7:30. The speaker will be Julian Orbach who will talk about his work on the Wiltshire volume in the Buildings of England series, first written by Sir Nikolaus Pevsner in 1963.

The 2016 Christmas Social will be on Friday 9th December at the Museum, 7pm for a prompt 7:30 start. We will be showing some historic films of Devizes. There will also be a tabletop quiz and the usual refreshments.

Seen Around Town

We all moan about parts of our town which are not as well kept as they should be, but it's good sometimes to give praise where effort and enthusiasm results in improvements.

Seen here is the row of houses on 'The Island' (between the Green and the little Green). A great improvement.



The hanging baskets around town are looking particularly good this year but the Castle Hotel has done that little bit extra. A sight for sore eyes!

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