

**Wells Civic Society
Minutes of the
Committee Meeting 7th November 2023**

Present: Chris Charles, Pam Crummay, Adrian l'Anson, Ian Robinson, Philip Welch & Chris Winter

1. Apologies: Patrick Brown, Jon Jefferies & Doug Robinson

2. Minutes of last meeting & matters arising

Agreed; at the last meeting JJ agreed to contact Royal Mail about the scruffy state of post boxes in the City. This he has done, but no reply as yet.

3. Treasurer's report: accepted

4. AGM & future of the Society

CW expressed concern that, as a number of committee members would not be standing for re-election, the capacity of the Society has become greatly reduced. It was agreed that the Society has always been held in high esteem and its opinions welcomed on a range of topics concerning the City. This has relied on the various skills, knowledge and expertise of committee members.

The general running of the society – its administration and events – also depends on the voluntary efforts of committee members.

It was agreed that members should be made fully aware of this situation and be asked for their further support if the society is to be able to continue. CW agreed to put this to members at the AGM and to circulate a short questionnaire to judge members' opinions.

If, in the worse-case scenario, it was agreed that it was not possible to continue, CW pointed out that the Constitution is clear about "Winding up".¹

CC said that he hoped that new initiatives (eg: the potential for development at Palace Farm) might spark more interest in the role of the Society as a representative voice for the community.

5. 2023/24 Programme

CW agreed to re-format the programme circulated to the committee and to make copies available to members at tomorrow evening's meeting.

6. Neighbourhood Plan update

AIA was congratulated on his hard work and determination to bring this to its final stage. The Inspector's comments and recommendations were positive and constructive. AIA thanked CW for her work at the beginning of the project.

A referendum will be held on 24th January. It was agreed that to help to increase interest (and turn out) AIA would give a brief presentation at the December evening. meeting.

¹ **16. WINDING UP:** The Society may be dissolved by a two-thirds majority of members voting at an Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting of the Society and confirmed by a simple majority of members voting at a further Special General Meeting held not less than fourteen days after the previous Meeting. If a motion for the dissolution of the Society is to be proposed at an Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting this motion shall be referred to specifically when notice of the Meeting is given. In the event of the dissolution of the Society the available funds of the Society shall be transferred to such one or more charitable institutions having objects similar or reasonably similar to those herein before declared as shall be chosen by the Executive Committee and approved by the Meeting of the Society at which the decision to dissolve the Society is confirmed.

7. AOB

PW was disappointed that the unveiling on the plaque at the Health Centre had not been reported in the Mendip Times, although Mark Adler had been present. He said he would send some copy and an image.

8. Date of next meeting 12th December at 4pm at The Swan

Wells Civic Society
Minutes of the meeting held on
10th October 2023

Present: Pam Crummay, Jon Jefferies, Christopher Spencer Jones, Ian Robinson and Philip Welch.

1. Apologies: Patrick Brown, Chris Charles, Adrian I'Anson. Doug Robinson and Chris Winter,

2. The minutes of the September meeting were approved. No matters arising.

3. Treasurers report:

IR reported that the balance had been lowered by the final payment of £2,900 made to Wells In Mosaic, as agreed at the last meeting, and the cost of the plaque at Priory Health Centre. Most subscriptions had been received and the few not yet in would be followed up. The final annual accounts were delayed as the inspector needed to check a couple of things, but the inspected Accounts would be circulated to Members before the AGM on 8th November.

4. Plaque update:

JJ reported that the Priory Health Centre plaque had been unveiled on 2 October as planned. PW said it appeared to be just hanging on the wall. JJ said he will be getting a builder to cement it against the wall. He also said that we now have 10 plaques around the city and also some older ones which perhaps we could renew or perhaps just clean. They could all be found on the map on the website.

5. Neighbourhood Plan

Nothing changed.

6. AOB

CSJ brought us up to date on his and CC's planned proposal for Palace Fields, showing us all some very impressive work on the project. He said that they and the Church Commissioners would be attending a private meeting with Wells City Council in the near future. Once public, perhaps it would be good to have a consultation meeting with all members.

JJ wondered if the old prison cells under the Town Hall could perhaps be cleared up and opened to the public.

Meeting closed at 5.15pm.

Date of next meeting: 7 November @ the Swan @ 4pm.

Wells Civic Society
Committee Meeting 12th September 2023
Minutes

Present: Pam Crummay, Adrian l'Anson, Jon Jefferies, Christine Jackson, Christopher Jones, Ian Robinson, Philip Welch and Chris Winter.

1. Apologies: Chris Charles, Doug Robinson

2. Minutes of last meeting & matters arising: Agreed; none not covered in the agenda. CW reported that Patrick Brown, former Chair and longstanding committee member, has indicated that he will stand down. CW will pay tribute to his valuable contribution at the AGM.

3. Treasurer's report:

"As of 6th September, WCS has just over £625 in the current account and £4,193 in the reserve account. In the past month we had one membership fee of £20 paid in and one item of expenditure - £96 to Zurich Insurance for our annual public liability cover.

The only remaining expenditure for this financial year ending 30th September is likely to be for the installation of our final blue plaque. I don't anticipate any further subscription income." IMR

4. Plaque update

JJ reported that the plaque had been installed at the Health Centre. The £40 fee for the installation was AGREED. JJ agreed to send a press release to Wells Voice publicising the unveiling on 2nd October at 12o/c. A list of attendees was discussed and JJ, PW and CW would invite them. Clare Blackmore would be asked to say a few words about the history of the building. DR would be asked to include the new plaque on the web page.

5. Website / email addresses

DR was thanked for the research he did into the cost of additional email addresses via the website, but it was agreed that **CJS** would set up gmail addresses: chair@, membership@, enquiries@ and opinion@ which should have no cost.

6. Neighbourhood Plan update

AIA reported that the NP was currently with the Inspector; any amendments will be dealt with by Somerset Council, then the Plan will go to Referendum.

7. 2023 – 24 Programme of evening events

CSJ had completed the 2023/24 programme. Additional speakers could also be asked for the Christmas and Summer events.

8. Housing development

CSJ gave an overview of the proposal for development at Palace Farm. It was agreed that any proposal should reference and support the Neighbourhood Plan. It was also agreed that this proposal should be pursued, however, it could not be endorsed on behalf of the Society without the express agreement of the members.

9. Bishops Barn / Recreation Ground update

CW reported back from the Open Spaces Committee of the City Council. It was agreed that the *Wells in Mosaic* team would invite City Councillors to discuss its future location.

10. Membership renewals

CW reassured the committee that the majority of renewals were made by annual standing order, others would be reminded by email on or after their due date. **IMR** agreed to liaise with **CJ** to explain the procedure.

11. AOB

PW circulated a Nomination Form for Wells Civic Awards.

12. Date of next meeting 10th October

**Wells Civic Society
Committee Meeting 8th August 2023
Minutes**

Present: Chris Charles, Pam Crummay, Adrian l'Anson, Jon Jefferies, Christopher Spencer Jones, Ian Robinson, Philip Welch & Chris Winter

Guest: Christine Jackson

1. **Apologies:** Patrick Brown¹ & Doug Robinson

2. **Welcome and introductions**

CW welcomed everyone and invited all to give a brief introduction for the benefit of newer members. She welcomed CJ with whom she and CSJ had discussed the interim support that was needed with membership management.

CW explained that the committee had the authority to co-opt members (ie: CC, CJ & CSJ) who might then be elected as full members of the committee at the AGM in November.

3. **Minutes of last meeting & matters arising**

Agreed; none not covered on the agenda.

4. **2023 – 24**

4.1 Programme of evening events see attached

CSJ confirmed that he was in the process of confirming speakers and exploring and inviting others; this included visits as well as talks and discussions. It was agreed that 'self-build' and the future of the Bishop's Barn should be topics early on the programme as they are very current in Wells. **CC** agreed to work towards a December / January date (re self-build) and **CW** would confirm speakers from SBPT and Historic England (re the Barn) for January / February as soon as possible.

It was also agreed that a more proactive approach to consultations and encouraging greater engagement from members, and the community generally, would be a priority for the coming year. This would be achieved through the programme of talks and also by setting up a *consultation panel*. **CSJ** had made a number of proposals in his circulated paper and these would be followed up over the course of the next few months.

4.2 Roles for 2023 see attached

As **CW** will be unavailable for a short period, tasks for running the Society and putting in place the programme of activities for the coming year need to be delegated.

CSJ agreed to lead and co-ordinate the programme of evening meetings and other associated activities, including setting up a mechanism for consultations, with support from **CC** and others.

CJ agreed to manage communication with Members. She and **CW** would meet to arrange a 'handover'. **CW** to ask **DR** to set up an appropriate email address for this and for responses to press articles.

IR would continue to manage refreshments for the evening meetings and in his role as Treasurer.

JJ will arrange for the installation of the Blue Plaque at the Health Centre and arrange for the unveiling with appropriate invitations and media attendance, with support from **PW**.

¹ For information of newer members: Patrick is a former Chair, however at aged 98 he no longer participates on a regular basis. However, his knowledge of architecture and planning, and of Wells in general, is unsurpassed, and when called upon he is willing to share this knowledge. He therefore remains a member of the Committee until a decision to the contrary is made by either party.

PC agreed to coordinate committee meetings.

AIA would be the first contact for planning (and related) consultations and would liaise with **CSJ** and **CC**.

PW agreed to promote events via local media and the Wells Community Network (WCN) newsletter, liaising with **CSJ**. He would also continue to provide an image to accompany the report of meetings written by Richard Hanks.

4.3 Moving forward in 2024

Through further discussions, a strategy will be developed, for greater engagement with members and the community. This should increase membership and the Society's influence on their behalf.

The programme of evening and other events, together with ongoing issues in Wells, is likely to drive this agenda.

5. Appeal for more involvement

Proposal for article in Wells Voice: It was agreed that it would be appropriate to send a press release once a programme was ready to publicise. This would include an appeal for more people to take an active part in the Society.

6. Reports

6.1 Treasurer's report

IMR Circulated & accepted

6.2 Neighbourhood Plan update

AIA reported that the Plan was with the Inspector.

6.3 Plaque update

JJ showed the completed plaque for the Old Workhouse, and agreed to arrange for its installation and unveiling.

7. AOB None

8. Date of next meeting tba

Wells Civic Society
Minutes of the Committee Meeting
held on 9th May 2023

Present: Pam Crummay, Adrian l'Anson, Doug Robinson, Ian Robinson, Christopher Spencer Jones and Chris Winter

1. **Apologies:** Patrick Brown, Gerry Clark, Jon Jefferies and Philip Welch
2. **Minutes of the last meeting & Matters arising**
Agreed and none not covered on the agenda.
3. **Chair's report CW** (see below)
CW welcomed Christopher Spencer Jones, who had recently moved to Wells and had an interest in making a contribution to the city. CSJ introduced himself and explained a little of his background, skills and what he might contribute.
4. **Discussion**
 - i. It was agreed that some reinvigoration was needed and this would require more active and engaged members to be recruited. This could be achieved through conversations with a range of interested people and with other organisations.
 - ii. A *mapping* exercise would help to identify what is already going on, where there might be 'gaps' and opportunities for collaboration.
 - iii. The Society could play a key role in facilitating the consultation that the City Council has already indicated it will need to carry out in order to take forward the development of the Bishops Barn and Recreation Ground. CSJ is interested in taking this forward.
 - iv. Better use might be made of the website and social media to raise the profile of the Society, in particular to a wider audience and to encourage more engagement and interaction.
 - v. The Society has funds which could be used to take projects forward.
 - vi. The Society might speak at a City Council meeting to encourage collaborative working on certain issues and/or projects.
 - vii. Regarding speakers: AIA has a contact who is passionate about extending the 20mph speed limit and it could be helpful to test this proposal with members; the Men's Breakfast has a list of speakers on topics which might be shared more widely with the members.
 - viii. NB: Dramatic headlines are eye catching!
 - ix. The "slavery" agenda is very topical and relevant to the City; following the recent conference organised by Jess Witchell at the Cathedral, CSJ, IR & AIA agreed to investigate the potential for further exploration, involving members and speakers with a range of points of view.
 - x. Literacy and the plight of libraries is an issue pertinent to Wells, which might also offer an opportunity to engage with schools. CSJ agreed to research this.
 - xi. VisitWells, tourism management and the visitor economy are also issues relevant to the Society; CW would renew contact with Andy Webb, Louis Agabani and Visit Somerset (John Turner).
5. After this wide-ranging discussion, it was **AGREED that CSJ should be co-opted to the committee** as Programme Secretary and to help to take forward some of the suggestions as agreed above.
6. **Membership CW**
New members: Keith & Elizabeth Scott, Chris Spencer Jones and Christopher Charles.
7. **Trees & Environment GC**
PC has not yet confirmed the removal of the dead sequoia tree with James Cross, but will do so as soon as possible.

The City Council does not feel able to progress any plans until they have had a response from English Heritage.

Heritage Open Days (September 2023) Regrettably I will not be able to organise this this year, with Antonia Gwynn from St Cuthberts, which she understands. I have suggested to the national HOD organisers that they contact the City Council to see if they would be interested. Julia Wood (former City & Museum Archivist) used to do this for Wells.

Item 6. 2023/4 programme – suggestions put forward:

- Bishop Michael Beasley
- New Dean (when appointed)
- Cathedral Virger
- Anne Cooke – about Chamberlain Street
- Local Radio
- Andy Vallis / Wells Voice
- Rev Dr Mark Hutchinson, Glastonbury Abbey
- Fenney Castle Vineyard / visit
- James Cross, Bishops Palace Head Gardener
- Crystal Johnson, Vicars' Close
- Annie Laws, Somerset Day

Item 7. Treasurer's Report

"With one new joint subscription, interest paid into the reserve account and no new expenditure, WCS's liquidity remains ~~only~~ slightly up on last month. We have £1,445 in the current account and £7,068 in the reserve.

"CAF has sold our shares in the fund we held previously and used all the proceeds to buy shares in the new fund approved by the committee. While the price of the new fund has risen a little since that purchase, members should expect to see it fluctuate much in line with other ESG funds on the stock market."

Ian Robinson, Hon. Treasurer

Item 9. Neighbourhood Plan Consultation (received from Somerset Council)

"Wells City Council has submitted their Neighbourhood Plan to Somerset Council for examination under Part 5 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended)

Extensive consultation has already been carried out by the City Council during production of the Plan, but the Council is now required to publicise the Plan for six weeks and invite representations before it is submitted for examination.

*The consultation will run between **Friday 28th April 2023** and **Friday 9th June 2023** and representations received outside this period may not be accepted.*

The submitted documents are available on the Council's website www.somerset.gov.uk/planning-buildings-and-land/neighbourhood-planning/neighbourhood-plans-in-production/ or available to view at the following locations:

- Somerset Council Offices, Cannards Grave Road, Shepton Mallet BA4 5BT (Opening hours 8.30 am – 5 pm Monday – Friday)
- Council Service Point at Wells Town Hall (Opening hours: 10.00am - 1.00pm, 2.00pm - 4.30pm, Weds and Fridays)

Following this consultation the comments received will be passed to an independent examiner who will consider any representations received and whether the Plan meets the "basic conditions" and

requirements set out in the Regulations. The examiner will then determine if the plan should be put to a community referendum.

Representations may include a request to be notified of the Local Planning Authority decision under regulation 19 (decision on a plan proposal).

Further information on neighbourhood planning and the “basic conditions” is available on the Council’s website www.somerset.gov.uk/planning-buildings-and-land/neighbourhood-planning but should you have any queries or require any further information then please contact a member of the planning policy team by email planningpolicyeast@somerset.gov.uk or by telephone: **0300 123 2224**

Yours faithfully

Andre Sestini

Principal Planning Policy Officer

Somerset Council, East Team

Somerset Council, Council Offices, Cannards Grave Rd, Shepton Mallet, Somerset BA4 5BT

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**Wells Civic Society
Committee Meeting Minutes
11th April 2023**

Present: Pammy Crummay, Jon Jefferies, Ian Robinson, Philip Welch & Chris Winter

1. **Apologies:** Patrick Brown, Gerry Clark, Adrian l'Anson & Doug Robinson

2. **Minutes & Matters arising:** Agreed & none not covered below.

3. Chair's report

- i. **CW** reported that Jules Tresidder had resigned from the Society and from her coopted role as Secretary due to other commitments.
- ii. **CW** had a meeting that morning with Christopher Spencer Jones (a new resident and member) who was very interested in becoming involved in Wells – especially the Bishops Barn / Recreation Ground development, on which he put forward a number of ideas.
- iii. **CW** had been unable to attend the Wells Recreation Ground Trust Working Group meeting on 30th March, so PC had represented WCS.
- iv. **PC** reported that not a great deal had yet happened, apart from essential repairs and fire tests which have been carried out by the City Council. An Open Day is planned for May¹ at which an exhibition on the history of the Barn may be possible, with information provided by Clare Blackmore and others. Parking, the location of the Bowls Club and many other issues have yet to be addressed.
The possibility of the Wells in Mosaic being located in the Rec. was briefly discussed but the complexity of this was acknowledged. (A representative of WiM was present at the WRGTWG).

4. **Membership:** 156 personal & 4 corporate.

5. Trees & Environment

PC reported that James Cross (Head Gardener at the Bishops Palace) was willing to remove the dead sequoia tree and the old fencing if required. It was agreed that PC should ask him to go ahead, with our thanks. **CW** said that she thought the surviving tree looked as if it was doing well.

6. Events

12th April A panel discussion with WCC Councillors covering the Bishop's Barn & Recreation Ground, the Portway Annexe, Planning and the new Unitary Authority

10th May St Cuthbert's Church – tour and talk

14th June Summer Social: Edgar Philips, has agreed to speak at this event.²

7. Treasurer's report

IR reported: "Total subscriptions are now £1,600 (£1,865 last year). They continue to come in piecemeal, but we are unlikely to reach last year's total. Expenses to date are £1,445, which is substantially down on this time last year, although last year we used the additional liquidity in the bank to make some sizeable donations.

"We have £1,473 in the current account and a tad under £7,073 in the reserve account, so overall liquidity remains good.

"You can see these figures in the accounts as of 4/4/23 attached.

"We have submitted our forms to the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) to move the investment fund to another one managed under the aegis of CAF. This was highlighted and agreed by the committee in the minutes of 7 February 2023."

¹ Later confirmed for 20th May 11.30 – 3pm

² At a meeting on 13th April with CW, a format was agreed for indoors & outdoors depending on the weather.

8. Plaques update

JJ reported that PB had supplied drawings to support the application for the plaque at the Health Centre, and these have been sent to the planning authority.

9. Council projects

- a. Signage: no progress
- b. Neighbourhood Plan: progressing

10. Planning report: no report

11. AOB

PC reported that the Rotary club would be organizing an Art for All event in June.

12. Date of next meeting 2pm May 9th 2023

Wells Civic Society
Minutes of the Committee Meeting
held on 7th February 2023

Present: Pam Crummay, Jon Jefferies, Ian Robinson, Philip Welch and Chris Winter.

1. **Apologies:** Patrick Brown, Gerry Clark, Adrian l'Anson, Doug Robinson & Jules Tresidder
2. **Minutes of the last meeting** (10th January 2023) Agreed
3. **Matters arising** (not on the agenda)
IT for greater engagement: From his in-depth research into the possible use of QR codes on plaques, IR had concluded that it was beyond both our financial and skills resources. It was agreed that this should be part of a city tourism strategy which was not within the remit of the Society, but would be better covered by the City or Somerset councils. IR agreed to forward his report to PW and DR. CW thanked him for this work.
4. **Chair's report** (CW) Covered during the meeting
5. **Membership update** (CW) New Member introduced by JJ, Herbie Davies, brings the total number of personal members to 152.
6. **Trees & Environment** No report

7. Events & speakers

8th February Balancing Heritage & Growth – Ian Green, Oxford Civic Society & ACT

It was **AGREED** that alongside an article about the society, with future dates etc, a ½ page ad. should be paid for to promote this event. The cost is £216.00.

8 th March	Sustainable Housing with Jackson Moulding, Director of SNUG Housing
12 th April	A panel discussion with Wells City Councillors covering the Bishop's Barn & Recreation Ground, the Portway Annexe, Planning and the new Unitary Authority
10 th May	St Cuthbert's Church – tour and talk
14 th June	Summer Social

8. Treasurer's report (IR)

"We continue to have plenty of liquidity, with about £2,213 in the current account and £7,052 in the reserve. Please bear in mind that about a third of the latter is earmarked for the Wells in Mosaic project. The current account is likely to reduce over the course of the year. Although we may get some more subscriptions from those who pay over the next few months, we will have more expenses in the form of meeting rooms and other costs.

"What is notable right now is the value of the Harry Parkes bequest fund (shown in the accounts as IFSL CAF Equity B income, which is its full name on the stock market). Taking the unit price as at 5 February, the value of the fund has risen sharply since the end of last September, in line with UK equity markets: the FTSE 100 closed last Friday at a record high. The current value of the fund is now £16,015. However, please bear in mind that this growth is unlikely to continue over the course of our financial year; so don't be surprised to see future monthly accounts showing falls as well as rises.

"Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) has recently written to us to say that they are closing the particular "sub-fund" in which WCS is invested. They are offering us the option either to transfer our money to one of several other funds run by the same investment manager, or to liquidate our units in the fund with a view to selecting a completely different fund in which to invest. All of the new sub-funds into which we could transfer our money are part of a range of new Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) funds set up under the auspices of the CAF. I am happy to brief any committee member interested on the basic whys and wherefores of ESG funds at a suitable juncture.

"I have done some reasonable due diligence on the investment management firm that has been running both the current fund and the new ESG funds, as well as looking at the short-term performance of the ESG

funds (only going since May 2022). As a result, I recommend we stick with CAF and the current investment manager, and transfer our money into the IFSL CAF ESG Income & Growth Fund. This will give us both periodic dividend income and the opportunity to grow (or the risk of diminishing) the value of the fund over time. This is essentially the same profile as our current fund provides. The risk rating of the ESG Income & Growth fund is marginally lower than our current fund, i.e. it is slightly less risky in terms of the underlying investments that make up the fund.

“The Committee has to take a decision on this before the end of June at the latest. However, I recommend we decide within the next fortnight to allow plenty of time to complete the paperwork and for CAF to answer any queries that may crop up.”

IR’s recommendation was accepted and the transfer (as above) **AGREED**.

9. Plaques update

- i. JJ reported that the planning application for the plaque on the Health Centre building (old workhouse) had gone to MDC, however, details drawings are still being requested of the ‘elevation’. The fee for the OS map supplied by CJ Architects was £38.28; this was **AGREED**.
- ii. The cost of 8000 revised Plaques leaflet for design and print by St Andrews Press is £584.25. The cost of distribution of 6000 of these by Glide Media is £192.00. These costs were **AGREED**.

10. City Council projects update (PW)

- i. **Portway Annexe:**
PW reported that it was doing well for room bookings but did not yet ‘wash its face’ in financial terms.
- ii. **Recreation Ground & Bishops Barn:** PW reported that:
 - an open day is being planned for the Barn
 - a fire risk report has been booked
 - an electrical report has been done
 - the Barn should be open for use by April
 - CW was invited to join the Wells Recreation Ground Trust Management Group, as the Civic Society should have input into development plans for the Rec.
 - A representative from Wells in Mosaic has also been invited to attend
 - The Bowling Club requested a small expansion of their ground, which the Town Clerk has refused.
 - The proposal for the inclusion of a Memorial Garden appears to have been dropped.
- iii. **Signage & bollards:**
CW met with PW and Cllr Denise Denis on 16th January, but this was inconclusive; the responsibilities for signs needs clarification before any improvements can be made.
- iii. **Neighbourhood Plan:** No report

11. Planning report None

12. AOB:

- i. DR was thanked for making updates to the website, which included a clearer indication of future events, and archiving past events.
- ii. The forthcoming change to a Unitary Authority (Somerset Council) was discussed. It is still unclear which responsibilities will be delegated to parish councils but there will be a Local Community Network covering the 18 parish councils, the Board of which will have one representative from each parish, 6 county councillors and representatives from other bodies.
- iii. Concerns were raised about the lack of representation to planning committees which would be clarified.

13. Date of next meeting: 2pm on 7th March 2023 at The Swan

Wells Civic Society

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 10th January 2023

Present: Gerry Clark, Pam Crummay, Adrian l'Anson, Jon Jefferies, Doug Robinson, Ian Robinson, Philip Welch and Chris Winter

1. **Apologies for absence:** Patrick Brown and Jules Tresidder
2. **Minutes of the last meeting** (13th December 2022) agreed
3. **Matters arising** (not on the agenda)
Sequoia tree in Palace Field: PC reported that she had spoken to James Cross, who seemed unconcerned about the removal of the dead tree. Of more significance was the continuing use of glyphosates on the farm.
4. **Chair's report**
 - CW had been in touch with the office of Bishop Michael, who has agreed to be President, and has accepted an invitation to speak. This is likely to be at the October meeting but is to be confirmed.
 - A discussion about future working covered a number of points:
 - Being more pro-active
 - Sharpen the focus
 - Be clear about what we do well and is valued by members eg: talks / local history
 - “cut our coat according to our cloth” – ie: *who* is going to deliver
 - Planning and local history are connected – make use of this to maintain focus
 - Contribution to the creation of the Local List: 60 buildings have been identified and it needs a team of people to bring this together (AIA)
 - Walking tours led by those with local knowledge and/or guided Plaque Trail
 - DR already does 'Building Stones' tours – could he offer this (or similar) for members?
 - Consider employing IT methods to increase engagement; eg: QR codes on the plaques offering more information. IR & DR offered to look into this and the resources required
 - Publicity could be stepped up, ensuring prior notice of talks and information about projects to a wider audience, and encouraging more participation
 - The website should be kept as up to date as possible; DR agreed to 'archive' any content more than 12 months old and all committee members asked to send content to DR
 - Money can be made available for any/all of the above
5. **Membership update** (CW) 156 personal + 4 corporate
6. **Trees & Environment** (GC)
Unfortunately, quite a number of Ash trees are being felled due to Die Back disease, especially along the Strawberry Line, which is temporarily closed.
7. **Events & speakers**

14 th December	Seasonal celebration – CW reported that this went very well, although not a large number, everyone enjoyed the event and feedback was good.
11 th January	Moirra Anderson, Bishop's Palace Swan Whisperer
8 th February	Balancing Heritage & Growth – Ian Green, Oxford Civic Society & ACT This will be advertised widely as it should be of interest to all stakeholders in planning and development.
8 th March	Sustainable Housing with Jackson Moulding, Director of SNUG Housing
12 April	PW said he would invite city councillors for a panel discussion on local projects. ¹

¹ PW has since confirmed that Louis Agabani will talk about the Bishop's Barn and Recreation Ground, Deborah Orrett the Portway Annexe, Sarah Powell planning and Theo Butt Philip to talk about Unitary.

10th May St Cuthbert's Church – tour and talk
14th June Summer Social

A number of suggestions for future events and speakers were made:

- Anne Cooke, who has written a book about Chamberlain Street
- Glastonbury FM – the role of local radio
- Andy Vallis – Wells Voice; the role of local media
- Mark Hutchinson
- Talk (and later visit?) local vineyard

8. **Treasurer's report**

IR reported a 'liquid' state, with further subscriptions paid in January, an increase in interest payments and £343 Gift Aid received.

9. **Plaques update**

JJ reported that permissions and the OS map were ready for the blue plaque planned for the workhouse/health centre, however, PB had been unable to supply the necessary drawings as yet.

10. **City Council projects update (PW)**

- i. **Portway Annexe:** this is doing well and is almost at capacity in terms of bookings.
- ii. **Recreation Ground & Bishops Barn:** a working group, made up of 4 councillors and 4 members of the public, has been set up, chaired by Cllr Sarah Powell. Fortunately, there is no lead in the paint in the barn, so it can be removed, and the floor will be sanded. The location of the bowling club and parking remain issues to be resolved. PW suggested that the Wells in Mosaic team might engage with this working group to discuss its possible location.
- iii. **Signage & bollards:** PW agreed to arrange a meeting with Cllr Denise Denis to revisit the WCS signage report of 2012. AIA said that some issues have been addressed in the Neighbourhood Plan.
- iv. **Neighbourhood Plan:** AIA reported that the process of examination was underway, and he expected completion 'mid-summer'.

11. **Planning report** Nothing to report.

12. **AOB**

- i. JJ suggested that WCS should have had a better presence at the Remembrance Day event. CW reported that she was at the Harry Patch memorial at the Museum, with the former and current chairs of the Royal British Legion, and presented them with the Harry Patch Mosaic window; this was featured in Wells Voice.
- ii. JJ considered that the plaques trail leaflet should be reprinted with slight modifications to ensure good visibility in the leaflet stands. This was **agreed** and CW & JJ would take this forward with St Andrews Press and Glide Media, the distribution company.
- iii. The Old Deanery has been sold to Nick Brice. AIA reported that although he intends it as a private residence, he does not yet have planning permission for change of use, and this is being opposed by the CIC set up to try to buy the building.

13. **Date of next meeting: 7th February 2023**

AND: 7th March, 11th April, 9th May, 13th June, 12th Sep, 10th Oct, 7th Nov & 12th Dec 2023