



## *Wells Civic Society*

### **Annual General Meeting**

**6.00pm November 9<sup>th</sup> 2022**

#### **Agenda**

- 1. Welcome**
- 2. Apologies for absence**
- 3. Minutes of the AGM held on the 10<sup>th</sup> November 2021**
- 4. Matters arising**
- 5. Presentation of the Annual Report**
- 6. Treasurer's Report**
- 7. Election of Officers and Executive Committee for 2022/3<sup>1</sup>**
- 8. Appointment of Independent Examiner for 2022/23**
- 9. Any other Business**

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<sup>1</sup> Current committee members standing for re-election are:  
Patrick Brown, Adrian l'Anson, Jon Jefferies, Ian Robinson, Philip Welch and Chris Winter. (Gerry Clark, Pam Crummay, Doug Robinson and Jules Tresidder are currently co-opted members)

# *Wells Civic Society*

## **Annual Report November 2022**

### **Chair's report**

I am pleased to report that we have managed a full year of regular meetings, together with a special event to celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Society, to which we welcomed Annie Maw, HM Lord Lieutenant of Somerset and the Mayor and Mayoress of Wells. We also managed to take some of our members to prison! A very enjoyable visit to Shepton Mallet Prison, and all escaped unscathed.

Due to the continuing support of so many loyal members, we have been able to contribute to a number of community projects, either with donations or participation.

The **City of Wells Neighbourhood Plan** is reaching its final stages and we were able to host a consultation event in October so that members had an opportunity to contribute to this important planning document.

There are a number of City Council projects which we maintain an active interest in:

- **Signage and street clutter:** having carried out a number of surveys ourselves in the past, we were assured that councillors would pick up this baton and try to find a way, working with Somerset County and Mendip District Councils, to improve signage and reduce clutter.
- **The Bishops Barn and the Recreation Ground** have been handed back to Wells and it is hoped that a development plan will be agreed in the not-too-distant future.
- **Portway Annexe** was purchased for the community and I understand is being well used by a number of groups and organisations.

We have made financial contributions to the following:

**Wells Museum**, towards the improvements to the gardens and for the Photographic Exhibition; **Wells in Bloom**; **The Lawrence Centre**, also for improvements to the gardens; **St Johns Ambulance**, for their attendance at the Platinum Jubilee Celebration in June; & our continuing membership of **Somerset Buildings Preservation Trust**.

We continue to support the **Wells in Mosaic** project, which recently reached the halfway mark of its making.

All of these events and organisations make significant contributions to the community and well-being of the City.

A number of oak trees were donated to the Society as part of 'plant a tree for the jubilee'. These were offered for a small donation for 'adoption' and the money raised has funded the Society's membership of the **Woodland Trust**.

The research project, carried out by the Alliance of Historic Cathedral Cities & Towns, "**Towards a better balance between heritage and growth**" has been completed and the report published and circulated nationally. Over the next six months there will be dissemination events in all of the case study cities and for other interested parties. This is an important document in terms of how civic societies, councils and developers should work together to achieve the housing targets that have to be met whilst preserving the character and integrity of cathedral cities and towns. An event will be held on February 8<sup>th</sup> here, as part of our programme of evening meetings. The report can be downloaded from: [www.htvf.org](http://www.htvf.org)

Antonia Gwynn from St Cuthbert's Church, and I coordinated a programme of events city-wide to celebrate **Heritage Open Days**, which happens annually in September, nation-wide, to encourage engagement in heritage and to allow access to some unusual places. Our own contribution was a guided tour of our Blue Plaques, which mark some of the people and places in the history of Wells.

I am delighted to report that **membership** continues to grow, after a dip a few years ago, and now stands at 157, plus four corporate members. However, if the Society is to continue to thrive, we still need to increase the membership and to encourage more active engagement.

I would like to thank members, and especially committee members, for their support over the last year, and to ask a few more people to come forward to share the load of running the Society.

We look forward to another year of interesting talks and continuing engagement with the Wells community.

*Chris Winter*  
*Chair*

### **Treasurer's report**

The Society has ended the latest financial year (30/09/22) in a reasonably healthy position. We had:

- £702 in the current account
- £7,036 in the reserve account
- £14,084 as the value of the Harry Parkes Bequest fund, combining to produce
- **£21,822 in total assets.**

Last year, we ended with total assets of £26,064.

Compared with the previous year, the main changes in 2021/22 have been:

- The value of the Harry Parkes Bequest fund has fallen by £1,586 over the year. This is down to the fall of UK share prices, particularly since the recent "mini-budget". We did, however, receive more in dividends this year (£376) compared to last year's £198.
- HMRC paid WCS a gift aid rebate of £331 (£384 the previous year). This is an important contributor to our income, which is why we encourage members who are UK taxpayers to complete the gift aid form and tick the box giving permission to claim in future years.
- The financial statements (p4) show that this past year we spent considerably more on donations (£1,785 compared with £285). This was primarily due to your Committee's view that we could afford such additional expenses after the Covid restrictions of the previous year meant we had a considerable surplus in the bank. The other major expense and increase over the previous year was £1,583 spent on the Society's Platinum Jubilee lunch. However, with members' contributions of £1,400, the net cost to the Society was £183.
- Our subscriptions rose from £1,730 to £1,865, thanks to new members joining in greater numbers than left us. This should also produce a slightly higher gift aid rebate from HMRC in 2022/23.

The Society continues to support Wells in Mosaic. This year we donated £2,000 (£2,100 in 2021/22) to enable Ruth Ames-White to continue creating the mosaic.

Many thanks to Marilyn Cattell for continuing to examine our accounts.

*Ian Robinson*  
*Honorary Treasurer*

### **Trees & Green Environment**

Of the trees planted on the Bishop's Brook estate, off the Glastonbury Road, about 60 percent have died due to lack of aftercare, including lack of water during this summer's drought.

There have been several trees felled by the high summer winds; these are mainly in Park Woods and the small wood at the rear of the Cold Store. Trees also seem to be shedding leaves early this year in response to the exceptionally dry summer.

Tree felling due to Ash tree disease seems now to be complete, notably along Strawberry Way.

A list of the green spaces, to be protected and cherished, forms part of the Neighbourhood Plan.

*Gerry Clark*  
*Tree Officer*

**Wells Civic**  
**Schedule of Income and Expenditure**  
**for the year ended 30 september 2022**

	2022	2021
<b>Income</b>		
	£	£
Subscriptions	1,865.12	1,730.12
Interest (NatWest Business Reserve)	4.60	0.89
Harry Parkes bequest (fund dist.)	375.99	198.05
Gift Aid	331.05	383.72
Donations	121.00	-
Plaque contributions	-	-
Mosaic project	-	-
Xmas	-	-
Platinum celebration lunch	1,400.00	-
Investment proceeds	-	-
Others	400.00	40.00
Revaluation of HPB assets	(1,585.72)	3,464.78
	<u>2,912.04</u>	<u>5,817.56</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
	£	£
Rent	£427.68	-
General expenses	£84.99	-
Chair's travel	£0.00	-
Neighbourhood Plan	£0.00	-
Donations/ memberships	£1,785.00	285.00
Printing	£61.00	-
BA5 Awards	£0.00	-
Plaques	£673.00	637.40
Insurance	£163.20	28.80
Art360	£0.00	-
Website	£40.79	222.29
Boyne Memorial trees	£0.00	-
Platinum celebration lunch	£1,583.00	-
Xmas	£0.00	-
Wells in Mosaic Project	£2,000.00	2,100.00
Waterways	£0.00	-
Other	£336.00	35.00
	<u>7,154.66</u>	<u>3,308.49</u>
Surplus	<u>£4,242.62</u>	<u>£2,509.07</u>

	Opening Balance £	Closing Balance £	Variation £
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Current a/c	1,363.49	701.99	( 661.50)
Unprocessed receipts and payments	-	-	-
NatWest Bank	1,363.49	701.99	( 661.50)
CAF UK Equity Fund B	15,669.61	14,083.89	( 1,585.72)
NatWest Reserve	9,031.24	7,035.84	( 1,995.40)
Debtors	-	-	-
<b>Current Assets</b>	26,064.34	21,821.72	( 4,242.62)
<b>Current Liabilities</b>	-	-	-
<b>Net Current Assets</b>	26,064.34	21,821.72	( 4,242.62)
<b>Total Assets</b>	26,064.34	21,821.72	( 4,242.62)

Honorary Treasurer

*Jan Robinson*  
Date  
13/10/22

Honorary Examiner

*W E Cattell*  
Date  
13/10/22

# *Wells Civic Society*

## Annual Report November 2021

### Chair's report

I am delighted that we can at last come together in person, after the restrictions of the past year and a half. We started cautiously but were able to enjoy a late Summer Social at the end of September and hope to bring you more frequent talks and events in the coming year. I am grateful for the ongoing support of all members and especially Committee Members who have helped to keep projects and partnerships going.

These include:

- Revisiting the **street signage** surveys carried out by the Society, with a promise from all three councils to assess the current situation, with a view to making some improvements we hope;
- The **Neighbourhood Plan** which continues to be progressed, led by Adrian l'Anson, city councillor and committee member;
- Adrian also responds on our behalf to **planning** applications which may impact the historic built environment;
- Proactive monitoring of the **green environment**, including trees, hedges and other green spaces which are so important to the city and its environs;
- The **research project** (supported by Historic England) by the Alliance of Historic Cathedral Cities and Towns (of which I am a member) looking into the impact of housing growth on historic towns across the country. Having acted as the pilot for the study, Wells is now one of the 13 case studies;
- **Heritage Open Day**, which was slightly lower key than in previous years but we were still able to put together a programme of events in early September to encourage the exploration of some of the lesser-known historic buildings in the city. My thanks especially to Antonia Gwynn and to participating venues;
- Our customary donation to **Wells in Bloom**;
- Support for **Wells Museum** especially the summer exhibition;
- **Wells in Mosaic** – receiving the beautifully carved blue lias stone in recognition of our sponsorship;
- The **Plaques Trail leaflet** which is being distributed in the city to visitors and residents to encourage wider exploration of the places and people we have marked with our plaques;
- Support for the **Portway Annexe** Community Group;
- and for the **Wells Coronavirus Network**;
- **Project Factory** and the **Community Day** in July, with a stall in the Cathedral and a re-enactment of the **Monmouth Rebellion** by some of our very own thespians.

One of the projects we will definitely be adding to this list in the coming year will be **Trees for the Jubilee**. We share Her Majesty the Queen's 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary next year and are already looking at how we can contribute to this very positive way of celebrating.

We have welcomed nine new members during the year, which brings the total to 148, plus 4 Corporate Members.

A number of long serving members of the committee will not be standing for re-election this year and I wish them well for the future and a big "Thank you" for all they have done

for the Society over the years. We look forward to welcoming some new members with fresh ideas and energy to secure our future.

Finally, I am sure I speak for all of our members, in wishing **Bishop Peter Hancock** and his wife Jane a long and happy retirement. As President of the Society, we were very pleased to welcome them on many occasions and will miss them both, and their contribution to the city's community.

*Chris Winter*  
*Chair*

## **Treasurer's report**

The Society has again ended the latest financial year (30/09/21) in a generally healthy position. We had:

- £1,363 in the current account
- £9,031 in the reserve account
- £15,670 as the value of the Harry Parkes Bequest, combining to produce
- **£26,064 in total assets.**

Last year, we ended with total assets of £23,555.

Compared with the previous year, the main changes in 2020/21 have been:

- The value of the Harry Parkes Bequest fund has risen by £3,465 over the year. This is down to the recovery of UK shares prices since the early days of the pandemic. The fund is invested in a broad range of UK equities, which also periodically pay out dividends, albeit relatively small sums each year (£198 this past year).
- HMRC paid WCS a gift aid rebate of £384 (0 the previous year). This is an important contributor to our income, which is why we encourage members who are UK taxpayers to complete the gift aid form and tick the box giving permission to claim in future years. This, however, means that should a member cease to be a taxpayer, please tell the Treasurer as soon as practicable. Gift aid this coming year will be lower than last because we have a reduced membership. But it will still be a sum well worthwhile collecting.
- The financial statements (p4)\* show that, although total cash income was down about 14%, expenses (excluding a further payment for the Wells in Mosaic project) fell by close to 28%, accounted for mainly by the fact the WCS was unable to hold any meetings and thus there was no expenditure on room rental. Members' subscriptions made up 74% of WCS's income last year (66% in the previous one).

The Society continues to support Wells in Mosaic and this year has donated £2,100 to pay for more tiles to enable work to build the mosaic to continue. Last year, among other expenditures, the Society paid £645 for the placement of a number of plaques and £245 to Wells in Bloom.

Many thanks to Marilyn Cattell for continuing to examine our accounts.

*Ian Robinson*  
*Honorary Treasurer*

\*The examined accounts will be appended to this report as soon as they are available.

# *Wells Civic Society*

## **Annual Report November 2020**

### **Chair's report**

Just like all other organisations, we have very much had to make the best of a bad job for the latter part of this year. However, we have still managed to make some significant contributions to the community of Wells.

It is gratifying that some of the issues raised by the Society have been taken up and progressed, including better traffic management in the city centre and signage, and a Neighbourhood Plan for the City. Whilst these may take some time to achieve, we will continue to work towards protecting and enhancing the city environs. Responding to planning applications and proactive monitoring of the green environment are two important areas which committee members commit to.

The research being carried out by the *Alliance of Historic Cathedral Cities and Towns* (ACT) continues, and we were pleased to host a visit by researcher Ian Green in early March, just before all travel ceased!

We were able to meet for our usual monthly evening meetings from last October to March, which included our festive gathering in December. This occasion not only featured the talents of Gert & Daisy, but we were also able to present the BA5 Awards, supported by our partners Wells Voice and the Chamber of Commerce and Tourism. Sadly though, no *ART 360°* or *Heritage Open Day* this year, nor the traditional *Summer Social*.

The committee has continued to meet electronically and to deal with 'matters arising', which included decisions about the projects and organisations we support in the city. This year these have included: the Visit by Coach and 'meet and greet' project, through the Tourism Forum, Wells in Bloom, Wells Museum and the exhibition of the Phillip's Portrait Exhibition, as well as Wells in Mosaic. This is in addition to installing two new plaques, at the site of the former Mitre Hotel in Sadler Street, and at the City Arms, before Covid restrictions curtailed our activities.

We have seriously considered the possibilities for resuming meetings, and although the Museum is happy to continue hosting these, dependent of course on Covid 19 rules and restrictions, we have decided to err on the side of caution – especially with winter coming – but will continue to review the situation and I will be in touch as soon as circumstances allow. If you can, keep an eye on the website, where we try to keep any news up to date.

Your continued support is greatly appreciated and I would like to thank the members of the committee for their ongoing efforts to help to keep the society active and interesting and Marilyn Cattell for examining our accounts.

*Chris Winter*  
*Chair*

## Treasurer's report

The Society ended the latest financial year (30/09/20) in a generally healthy position. We had:

- £2,320 in the current account
- £9,030 in the reserve account
- £12,205 as the value of the Harry Parkes Bequest, combining to produce
- **£23,555 in total assets.**

The bank accounts showed an increase over the year-end equivalents at the same time last year. This was due to the drop-off in expenses, driven largely by our being unable to meet since last March courtesy of the lock-down and then various social distancing measures.

The value of the Harry Parkes Bequest fund has dropped by £1,663 (12%) over the year. This is not surprising, given that Bequest Fund is invested in UK equities, and the FT 100 was about 20% lower and the FT 250 some 12% down over the same 12-month period.

The financial statement (p4) shows that, although total cash income was down about 12%, expenses fell by almost 48%, accounted for mainly by reduced expenditure on rent for meetings, donations and plaques.

The Society continues to support Wells in Mosaic and since the year-end has donated £2,100 to pay for more tiles to enable work to build the mosaic to continue, until fundraising activities can resume. Last year, among other expenditures, the Society donated £500 to Wells & Mendip Museum, £272 to the Phillip's photo exhibition and £245 to Wells in Bloom.

*Ian Robinson*  
*Honorary Treasurer*

## Membership Report

We have welcomed a total of nine new members during the year, including two during lockdown who have recently moved into St Thomas Street, which brings the total to 167, including Corporate Members.

Updating the membership list recently has identified some members who have not responded to any written notifications or emails for the past year and have not attended any evening meetings pre Covid. This has effectively decreased overall membership numbers and with no vehicle for recruitment at this time, we are unable to reverse this, but we look forward to being able to do so in the future.

*Clare Blackmore*  
*Membership Secretary*



**Wells Civic**  
**Schedule of Income and Expenditure**  
**for the year ended 30 september 2020**

	2020	2019
<b>Income</b>		
	£	£
Subscriptions	1,825.12	2,245.12
Interest (NatWest Business Reserve)	13.78	16.57
Harry Parkes bequest (fund dist.)	327.38	391.64
Gift Aid	-	181.65
Donations	178.60	15.00
Plaque contributions	-	254.00
Mosaic project	-	-
Xmas	-	-
Summer	-	-
Investment proceeds	-	-
Others	400.00	-
Revaluation of HPB assets	(1,662.86)	(1,343.82)
	<u>1,082.02</u>	<u>1,760.16</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
	£	£
Rent	£237.60	380.16
General expenses	£0.00	16.00
Chair's travel	£0.00	186.85
Neighbourhood Plan	£0.00	-
Donations/ memberships	£897.00	936.43
Printing	£19.00	476.00
BA5 Awards	£60.00	-
Plaques	£106.20	676.00
Insurance	£0.00	163.05
Art360	£0.00	-
Website	£0.00	-
Boyne Memorial trees	£0.00	-
Summer	£0.00	75.90
Xmas	£0.00	-
Mosaic Project	£0.00	-
Waterways	£0.00	-
Other	£200.00	-
	<u>1,519.80</u>	<u>2,910.39</u>
Surplus	<u>-£437.78</u>	<u>-£1,150.23</u>

	Opening Balance £	Closing Balance £	Variation £
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Current a/c	1,158.79	2,320.09	1,161.30
Unprocessed receipts and payments	(50.00)	-	50.00
NatWest Bank	1,108.79	2,320.09	1,211.30
CAF UK Equity Fund B	13,867.69	12,204.83	(1,662.86)
NatWest Reserve	9,016.57	9,030.35	13.78
Debtors	-	-	-
<b>Current Assets</b>	<b>23,993.05</b>	<b>23,555.27</b>	<b>(437.78)</b>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Net Current Assets</b>	<b>23,993.05</b>	<b>23,555.27</b>	<b>(437.78)</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>23,993.05</b>	<b>23,555.27</b>	<b>(437.78)</b>

Honorary Treasurer

*Robin*  
 Date 13/10/20

Honorary Examiner

*W E Catell*  
 Date 13/10/20



## *Wells Civic Society*

### **Annual General Meeting**

**7.30pm November 13<sup>th</sup> 2019**

#### **Agenda**

- 1. Welcome**
- 2. Apologies for absence**
- 3. Minutes of the AGM held on the 9<sup>th</sup> January 2019**
- 4. Matters arising**
- 5. Presentation of the Annual Report**
- 6. Treasurer's Report**
- 7. Election of Officers and Executive Committee for 2019/20<sup>1</sup>**
- 8. Appointment of Independent Examiner for 2019/20**
- 9. Any other Business**

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<sup>1</sup> Current committee members prepared to stand again are:

Graham Barrow, Clare Blackmore, Patrick Brown, Rosemary Evans, Andrew Fawcett, Adrian l'Anson, John Rackham, Hilary Waters, Philip Welch, Chris Winter. (Doug Robinson is a co-opted member)

The current treasurer, Rodney Angel, is standing down. We are very grateful to Rodney for his work in this role for the last 5 years.

Nomination received to date are:

Ian Robinson (Treasurer)

# *Wells Civic Society*

## **Annual Report 2019**

### **Chair's report**

The past year has been full of events and visits – as diverse as *ART 360°* and *Heritage Open Day 2018*, and geographically as far apart as Ripon & Worcester.

We have added to the plaques which commemorate and mark the places, events and people which have made, and continue to make, Wells the very special place it is.

But as well as organising and progressing our own events and projects we have enjoyed working in partnership with the many other organisations that thrive in the city. By working together, we are able to increase the impact that we can have – improving the experience of living and working in Wells as well as for our many visitors.

The *Visit by Coach* and 'meet and greet' project, together with the *Tourism Forum*, bring together a range of people and organisations, and continues to work towards better 'tourism management' for everyone's benefit.

The *Somerset Poppies*, *Wake Up Wells*, *Wells in Bloom* and the exhibition of the *Philip's Portrait Collection* are some of the very notable community projects that we were delighted to support during the year, as well as our ongoing support for *Wells in Mosaic*.

The civic society continues to be invited to comment on, or contribute to, a range of decision-making fora: -*Mendip Conservation Advisory Panel*, *Wells City Council planning committee*, as well as the tourism forum, as above.

At a national level, the *Alliance of Historic Cathedral Cities and Towns* (ACT) has received the support of Historic England (formerly English Heritage) for the research into the impact of housing development on historic towns and cities. A meeting of the Steering Group (of which I am a member) on 10<sup>th</sup> October will develop the criteria for the case studies and the detailed programme for the project. I am very hopeful that Wells will be able to make a significant contribution to this important piece of work.

The *BA5 Awards*, in partnership with Wells Voice and the Chamber of Commerce and Tourism, was launched in September with the deadline for nominations on 1<sup>st</sup> November. Andy Vallis (editor) and Robert Powell (chairman) are very supportive of the scheme and we hope to make this an annual event. Presentations will be made at our Seasonal Celebration on December 11<sup>th</sup>.

The programme of evening talks for 2019/20 covers a broad range of topics and other activities include hosting a visit by colleagues from the Chester Civic Society in early October and plans for a tour, in March, of the Clarks' Shoe Museum courtesy of the Alfred Gillett Trust.

I would like to thank the members of the committee for their ongoing support and work to help to keep the society active and interesting and Marilyn Cattell for examining our accounts.

Special thanks to Rodney Angel who is stepping down as Honorary Treasurer, a task that he has done for the past 5+ years.

*Chris Winter*

## **Treasurer's report**

The Civic Society remains in a very healthy financial position. Income exceeded expenditure in 2018/19; the most noteworthy areas are the rise in membership and a reduction in outgoings for the plaques. There has also been slightly less expenditure in terms of requests for donations to other projects and organisations.

The last 12 months have seen a fall in the value of the assets of the society due to low interest rates on the investment of the Harry Parkes fund. We have always been aware that this investment is subject to economic forces and for many years we have seen consistent growth. However, the high level of uncertainty in the UK this year, has meant a fall in the value of the investment.

In addition, one of the investment accounts was closed to realise the funds agreed to support Wells in Mosaic. The remaining £9000.00 is being held in a Reserve account, for ready access.

We are keen to satisfy Charity Commission rules regarding reserves, and support for community projects like Wells in Mosaic helps us to achieve this. We remain open to other ideas to support, in order that we continue to comply with these rules.

*Rodney Angel*

## **Membership Report**

Membership is steady at around 200. The society has had a visible presence at many events across the city during the past year and gained new members through these activities and events.

The encouragement to pay by Standing Order is proving successful and helps enormously.

*Clare Blackmore*

## **Plaque report**

We have installed three plaques since our last AGM:

- ✓ a Blue Plaque off the Glastonbury Road at Keward to commemorate the gibbet where criminals were executed, as well as men who fought for the Duke of Monmouth in 1685. This has encouraged interest in the idea of creating a Monmouth Rebellion exhibition in Wells.
- ✓ the penultimate plaque recording important architectural buildings was placed in The Liberty.
- ✓ an interior plaque, which mark and support the unique, long-serving family businesses that give character to our city centre. The recipient was Peter Douglas, the menswear shop that is celebrating its 40<sup>th</sup> year in Broad Street.

Future plans include Blue Plaques to mark the site of the Mitre Hotel on Sadler Street, currently Minsky's barbers, and on the City Arms to commemorate the former location of the City Jail. The final architectural plaque will be for Chamberlain Street, and the last two indoor plaques will be presented to long-standing family businesses.

*Philip Welch*

## **Planning report**

As a former planning solicitor and Planning Inspector, I am happy to monitor planning applications that affect Wells. Since May, when I was elected as a member of the City Council, I have been Vice Chair of their Planning Committee. I also sit on the Mendip Conservation Advisory Panel.

There have been several large housing applications to consider, such as the detailed application for the 220 houses west of Wells and the recent application for 100 houses south of Elm Close. These and others have been viewed in the context of the Inquiry into the Local Plan Part 2 which sat in August.

In addition, there have been the usual applications for new shops/cafes/bars on the High Street. The sale of the Old Deanery has prompted an Expression of Interest which is aimed at safeguarding its use for some cultural/community purpose. We are certainly living in interesting times in terms of the future of Wells – and hopefully, this will be shaped by revival of the Wells Neighbourhood Plan. Anyone with some expertise or interest in town planning or community consultation would be welcome to join Adrian and others to work on the WNP and consider the planning applications which WCS are consulted on.

*Adrian I'Anson*

## **Programme of evening events**

**11th December 2019**

Seasonal Celebration  
with presentation of the  
BA5 Awards for contributions to the community of Wells  
&  
The further exploits of Gert & Daisy (& little Betsy)

**8th January 2020**

(In the Exhibition Room)  
Building a Cathedral - Jerry Sampson

**12th February 2020**

A year in the life: with Alastair Tighe, Head Master, Wells Cathedral School

**11th March 2020**

Somerset Buildings Preservation Trust – Russell Lillford, Chairman

**8th April 2020**

A Bishop's Wife – then and now with Jane Hancock

**13th May 2020**

A load of rubbish!  
Mickey Green, Managing Director, Somerset Waste Partnership

**10th June 2020**

Summer Social  
6.30pm venue tba

*I look forward to seeing you - and do bring friends!  
If you would like to be involved in any of the projects we undertake, or have a  
skill you can share with us,  
please get in touch - [chris.f.winter@btinternet.com](mailto:chris.f.winter@btinternet.com)*





## **Annual General Meeting**

**7.30 pm 9<sup>th</sup> January 2019**

### **Agenda**

- 1. Welcome**
- 2. Apologies for absence**
- 3. Minutes of the AGM held on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2018**
- 4. Matters arising**
- 5. Annual report**
- 6. Hon Treasurer's report**
- 7. Election of Executive Committee for 2019\***
- 8. Appointment of Independent Examiner for 2019**
- 9. AOB**

\*Nominations for the committee would be very welcome and should be notified to the Chair.

Current members of the committee have indicated that they are prepared to serve another year in office. They are:

Rodney Angel  
Graham Barrow  
Clare Blackmore  
Patrick Brown  
Rosemary Evans  
Andrew Fawcett  
Adrian l'Anson  
John Rackham  
Doug Robinson  
Hilary Waters  
Philip Welch  
Chris Winter

## Annual Report 2018

I am grateful to all of our members and the committee for making 2018 another busy, successful year.

We ended on a *loud* note in December with our very own Town Crier, Len Sweales, and a sociable evening with wine and cheese.

Our evening talks throughout the year have featured a range of experts and entertaining speakers, broadening our knowledge on a number of subjects. Other events have included a visit from the Worcester Civic Society in September and ART 360 in August. I was invited by the Ripon Society to visit the town and to compare what our societies do, which was also interesting.

The 2017/18 programme ended with the *Summer Social* and strawberries and bubbles at the award-winning Cedars Hall.

In an auspicious year of WWI Remembrance, we have been pleased to support a number of projects in the City and to welcome speakers to talk about these.

We continue our programme of plaques – both indoor, for businesses which make significant contributions to the city, and outdoor *Blue Plaques* in locations of historical or local note. Sadly, there have been two occasions when these plaques have been damaged, but on the other hand our very own ‘Gert & Daisy’ have cleaned some of the older plaques.

We continue to achieve the aims set out in the **20:20 Vision** document launched a year ago. These include participation in Heritage Open Day, Wells Tourism Forum, Mendip Conservation Advisory Panel, Civic Voice and the Alliance of Cathedral Cities & Towns and donations to Wells in Bloom, the renovation of the Swan at Wells Museum, Visit by Coach and Wells in Mosaic.

I am grateful to members of the Committee for their diligence in the following areas:

**Trees and Environment:** There have been few Tree Protection Order (TPO) applications or application for the removal or -reshaping of trees within the Conservation area. To my knowledge, none of these have been contentious, and where I felt necessary, I have contacted the Mendip Tree Officer. I am hoping that in 2019, the Civic Society should associate with the Wells Mills Society and the Waterways Society. Close attention will be kept on the proposed new housing development on the north side of the A39 on the west side of Wells.

*Rosemary Evans*

**Planning:** We continue to keep a beady eye on significant planning applications that have an impact on Wells. We have supported people in the vicinity of Budgens by lodging objections to proposals for a mobile phone mast at this site. The latest application has been withdrawn. The choice of retailers on the High Street lies outside planning control. However, the condition of the fabric has been a matter for concern. Many will have seen the tree growing out of the King’s Head (an interesting anatomical concept!) but there are many other examples of lack of maintenance including rotting and missing pilasters at Barclays Bank. We have encouraged Mendip District Council to take planning enforcement action and will continue to nag them. Looking to the future, WCS has commented on the housing proposals in the Local Plan Part 2 and had discussions with Persimmon and Taylor Wimpey regarding details of the development west of Wells that Rosemary Evans has referred to. Details of our various submissions to MDC are set out on our excellent web site.

*Adrian I’Anson*

**Plaques:** During the year we have installed three Blue Plaques; the first was on 7a Portway, which was built on the former Brine's brush factory entrance. The next was installed on the boundary wall of The Rib to record that it was a childhood home of novelist Elizabeth Goudge. The third commemorates the Wells gallows and reads: "Near here during the 17th and 18th centuries stood the place of public execution for hanging, drawing, quartering and burning at the stake." There are now eight Blue Plaques in the series and two more are planned in 2019.

Indoor plaques were presented to barber Leon Tooze and Fishers jewellers.

*Philip Welch*

**Website:** This was revamped about a year ago, and it is hoped that people are finding it more useful as it is regularly updated and is a good source of information for the activities the society is involved with, and news of their progress.

Some of the remarkable stories behind the plaques are recounted in more detail and a *blog*, written by Adrian l'Anson, offers updates on the society's responses to planning applications. Visits to the site have doubled in recent months; about 90% of visitors are UK based with 6% from the USA. See: [www.wellscivicsociety.org.uk](http://www.wellscivicsociety.org.uk)

*Doug Robinson*

**Our financial situation** remains stable, helped by the increase in subscription fees which members agreed at the last AGM. The inspected accounts will be presented to the AGM.

#### **Looking forward to 2019**

There remain a number of activities that we would like to progress (eg: mapping the waterways of Wells); we would welcome the involvement of more members to increase our capacity for local projects.

There are four further evening talks on the current programme and a final social event in June at the Bishops Barn which will be an opportunity to bring you up to date with developments regarding the Barn, the Recreation Ground and Wells in Mosaic.

**February 13<sup>th</sup>:** The impact of community radio – *Allan Trinder & Joanne Schofield, GFM*

**March 13<sup>th</sup>:** Monmouth, the Rebellion and the bloody retribution of Judge Jeffreys – *Jon Jefferies*

**April 10<sup>th</sup>:** Welcome to Wells! Tourism: the city of culture, accommodation, coach tourism & 'meet & greet' – *Andy Webb, Tudor Hopkins & Ross Young*

**May 8<sup>th</sup>:** A year in the life of a mayor – *Cllr Celia Wride*

**June 12<sup>th</sup>:** **Summer Social event** – 6.30pm at the Bishops Barn: A barn, a recreation ground and a mosaic – *Wells Recreation Ground Trust's project manager, Ruth & Ian Ames-White.*

I look forward to 2019 and to welcoming you to our activities.

*Chris Winter, Chair*

*Wells Civic Society*  
Charity Commission Number: 208574  
President: *The Right Reverend The Lord Bishop of Bath & Wells, Peter Hancock*  
[www.wellscivicsociety.org.uk](http://www.wellscivicsociety.org.uk)



**Wells Civic Society**  
**Schedule of Income and**  
**Expenditure**  
**for the year ended 30 September 2018**

	2018	2017
<b>Income</b>		
Subscriptions	1,454.00	1,329.00
Gift Aid	177.86	376.55
Interest Scottish Widows	2.53	9.65
Harry Parkes Bequest	529.48	672.24
Donations	121.00	217.45
Other	228.00	370.20
Plaques contribution	177.00	1,036.40
Revaluation of funds	551.44	624.48
	<b>3,241.31</b>	<b>4,635.97</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Website	13.20	205.50
Rent	394.20	424.80
Expenses	239.20	104.58
Printing	383.50	257.10
Donations	1,667.50	281.50
Plaques	859.06	1,036.40
Summer	166.70	-
Xmas	90.00	-
Insurance	164.11	160.00
Boyne Memorial Trees	13.55	-
Mosaic	5,000.00	-
Sale loss investment	387.34	-
Other	228.00	325.20
	<b>9,606.36</b>	<b>2,795.08</b>
Surplus	<b>( 6,365.05)</b>	<b>1,840.89</b>

	2018		
	Opening Balance	Closing Balance	Variation
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Current a/c	2,623.11	931.77	( 1,691.34)
Unprocessed receipts and payments	-	-	-
Nat West Bank	2,623.11	931.77	( 1,691.34)
CAF Fixed Interest Fund B	9,558.48	-	( 9,558.48)
CAF UK Equity Fund B	14,660.07	15,211.51	551.44
Scottish Widows Deposit	4,914.27	-	( 4,914.27)
Nat West Reserve		9,000.00	9,000.00
Debtors	-	-	-
<b>Current Assets</b>	<b>31,755.93</b>	<b>25,143.28</b>	<b>( 6,612.65)</b>
Historic Plaques Provision	( 247.60)	-	247.60
<b>Net Current Assets</b>	<b>31,508.33</b>	<b>25,143.28</b>	<b>( 6,365.05)</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>31,508.33</b>	<b>25,143.28</b>	<b>( 6,365.05)</b>

**Honorary Treasurer**  
*Rodney Angel*

**Honorary Examiner**  
*Marilyn Cattell*



**Annual General Meeting  
7.30 pm 10<sup>th</sup> January 2018**

**Agenda**

- 1. Welcome**
- 2. Apologies for absence**
- 3. Minutes of the AGM held on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2017**
- 4. Chair's report**
- 5. Hon Treasurer's report**
- 6. Membership Secretary's report**
- 7. Planning Group report**
- 8. Environment Report**
- 9. Plaques Scheme report**
- 10. Election of Officers and Executive Committee for 2018**
- 11. Appointment of Independent Examiner for 2018**
- 12. AOB**



## Annual Report 2017

### Chair's report

The Society has had another successful year with increased membership, more plaques presented and further involvement with city-wide projects working with a number of partners, which include the City Council (Tourism Forum, Wells in Bloom and Heritage Open Day), the Chamber of Commerce and Tourism, VisitSomerset, The Swan Hotel (Visit by Coach & Tourism Forum), The Bishops Place, Wells Cathedral, Cedars Hall (Wells Cathedral School), Civic Voice and many others.

These sole and joint projects help to raise our profile which in turn attracts new members and more support but also help us to achieve our aims and objectives in terms of contributing to the community and city of Wells.

This is my opportunity to thank everyone who has contributed to this success, which I do most sincerely: all the committee members in their various roles and others too (notably Richard Hanks and Virginia Nasmyth) who are not committee members but regularly give their time and skills.

Thanks also to all of our speakers throughout the year. The range of topics and the breadth of experience never ceases to amaze me and to inform and entertain our members.

For me, notable events this year were:

- ART 360 - special thanks to Clare and Hilary, and to D H James and Dean John Davies;
- Our summer social at the museum – special thanks to Andrew, our invaluable link at museum;
- The Christmas celebration – special thanks to Gert and Daisy; and to Bishop Peter and Jane, for their indulgence.

The Wells in Mosaic team has been working very hard behind the scenes and progress has been made and we are delighted that we will shortly be announcing the location and are now able to set up a CIC (Community Interest Company) to begin serious fundraising.

The website has been dramatically improved and continues to be developed, thanks to Adrian and Doug. [www.wellscivicsociety.org.uk](http://www.wellscivicsociety.org.uk)

The programme of evening events is in place up to June 2018 so we have more to look forward to.

*Chris Winter, Chair*

### Honorary Treasurer's report (for the year to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017)

The last 12 months has seen the assets of the society including the bequest from Harry Parkes increase by £804.48 to £31,755.93 excluding a small provision for the Blue Plaque project. The cash reserves stand at £7,537.38 which is up from £7,357.37.

Expenditure on Blue Plaques increased significantly in 2017 and this was covered from the provision made for this ongoing project. When removing this from the figures expenditure was down on the previous year. Donations were down significantly but 2016 saw the first payment of £500 made to support the *Visit by Coach* project. A further £500 was committed to this project for the year ending September 2018. 2016 also saw payments in respect of the waterways and Wells in Mosaic projects which were not repeated in 2017. Wells in Mosaic remains a project that will

have a financial commitment going forward. Funds have been ear marked for this from our investments.

The Harry Parkes Bequest increased in value to £24,218.55 and provided an increase in its return to £672.24 (2.77%) which is satisfactory. To satisfy the Charity Commissions rules and regulations an element of this fund will continue to be utilised to fund our support for the ongoing Wells in Mosaic project.

The CAF Fixed Interest Fund B account investment has fallen by £334.57 (3%) whilst the CAF UK Equity Fund B has increased by £959.05 (7%).

Subscriptions were down by £105 whilst another two years Gift Aid returns were completed. This took us up to date and the 2017 return will be completed during this financial year.

*Rodney Angel, Honorary Treasurer*

## **Membership Report**

The membership of the Civic Society has grown over the past year to 206 which is a record number. This has mostly been due to a more public presence in the city and the Civic Society making friendly approaches to potential members instead of waiting for people to come to them. During the next year we plan to be more proactive especially with the traders and other businesses in the city and develop our corporate membership.

One thing that would help is for current members to establish a direct debit for their membership fees and this will be a priority for 2018.

*Clare Blackmore, Membership Secretary*

## **Planning Report**

As a former planning solicitor and Planning Inspector I work with Graham Barrow, a former planning officer, to keep a beady eye on planning applications that affect Wells. We are automatically informed by Mendip District Council of relevant applications, receive the City Council Planning Committee agendas and occasionally attend their meetings. I also sit on the Mendip Conservation Advisory Panel. On behalf of the Society, Graham and I have made comments on various applications over the last year, including objections to inappropriately sited mobile phone masts and the unattractive fascia at "The Works". We have encouraged the owners of land in the City to make improvements such as removal of the planks at Kendrick Court and redevelopment of the vacant unit next to M&Co. In June, Chris Winter and I met a representative of the Church Commissioners to discuss the likely housing development of Palace Farm and the potential for a "park and walk" scheme. Later in the year, we met the Diocesan Secretary to discuss the future of the Old Deanery. The consultation period for the Local Plan Part 2 has just opened and the Society will be making appropriate comments on that. Anyone with some expertise or interest in town planning would be welcome to join Graham and me.

*Adrian I'Anson*

## **Environment report**

The green environment is as important to Wells as its built environment and, with thanks to Rosemary Evans for her vigilance, we continue to monitor any planning or management and maintenance issues which impact on this.

The Boyne Memorial trees planted in Palace Fields, after an uncertain start, appear to be reasonably well established now.

Trees at The Rib and others on Palace Fields have received attention during the year and some at the Recreation Ground will be removed as part of improvements to the whole area.

The general state of waterways in the city sometimes causes concern; however, rubbish has been removed from the Tor Furlong area, and further work will follow on from the comprehensive Waterways Survey carried out previously.

## **Plaques report**

**Blue plaques:** Two have been installed in the last year. One commemorates England's greatest cricketer, W G Grace, being dismissed for a mere three runs at the Recreation Ground. The

second marks the visit to Wells in 1685 of Judge Jeffreys to sentence almost 100 participants on the Monmouth Rebellion in one day. Permissions have been granted for two more Blue Plaques early in the New Year.

**Indoor plaques:** Four were presented. They went to Brownes Garden Centre whose history dates back to 1808, the Earthcraft shop in Priory Road which has served Wells since 1979 and db+Paul of St Cuthbert Street which has been looking after buildings in Wells for about 150 years, and Leon Tooze who has run his barber shop for 53 years and has no plans to retire.

*Philip Welch*

### **Wells in Mosaic Project report**

This long-term project is now gathering momentum and, after several necessary bureaucratic processes have been completed, which should be soon, the art work itself and the fundraising will begin in earnest. We look forward to sharing plans for a 'launch' very soon.

The project team is Chris Winter and Philip Welch, Ian and Ruth Ames-White, and Steve Wilson. We are grateful to Richard James of Solicitors Title LLP for his legal advice and to both the City and District Councils for their support.

### **Tourism report – Tourism Forum, Visit by Coach etc**

Chris Winter and Andrew Fawcett work with partners across the city on a number of projects relating to tourism management. These not only enhance the experience of those visiting our lovely city but also improve our own environment, in terms of parking, coach traffic especially, and increased business for retailers, restaurants and cafes and accommodation providers, which in turn benefits the city as a whole in economic terms.

### **In conclusion...**

In order that we make the best use of the time, skills and money available to us, we have been thinking about a 'strategy' for the next three years and would like members to consider the draft **20:20 Vision** document which will be available at the AGM. We hope members will contribute their thoughts and comments so that we can make this something that will help us to focus as well as informing potential supporters of what we do and what we plan to do.

I look forward to continuing all of these exciting projects and to our regular meetings. We are grateful to everyone for the amazing support that the society receives from so many across the city – especially our members.

*Chris Winter, Chair*


Copy of examined accounts

**Wells Civic**  
**Schedule of Income and Expenditure**  
**for the year ended 30 september 2017**

	2017	2016
<b>Income</b>		
Neighbourhood Plan	-	-
Subscriptions	1,329.00	1,434.00
Gift Aid	376.55	338.43
Interest Scottish Widows	9.65	19.59
Harry Parkes Bequest	672.24	655.73
Donations	217.45	106.60
Xmas	-	125.00
Other	370.20	-
Mosaic Project	-	-
Plaques	1,036.40	216.00
Revaluation of funds	624.48	1,621.13
	<u>4,635.97</u>	<u>4,516.48</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Website	205.50	61.20
Rent	424.80	357.60
Expenses	104.58	70.38
Printing	257.10	237.00
Donations	281.50	1,309.49
Plaques	1,036.40	216.00
Chairs Travel	-	365.53
Summer	-	145.35
Xmas	-	90.41
Insurance	160.00	134.50
Mosaic	-	282.40
Waterways	-	282.40
Other	325.20	-
	<u>2,795.08</u>	<u>3,552.26</u>
Surplus	<u>1,840.89</u>	<u>964.22</u>

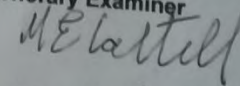
	2017		
	Opening Balance	Closing Balance	Variation
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Current a/c			
Unprocessed receipts and payments	2,452.75	2,623.11	170.36
Nat West Bank	-	-	-
CAF Fixed Interest Fund B	2,452.75	2,623.11	170.36
CAF UK Equity Fund B	9,893.05	9,558.48	( 334.57)
Scottish Widows Deposit	13,701.02	14,660.07	959.05
Debtors	4,904.62	4,914.27	9.65
	-	-	-
<b>Current Assets</b>	<u>30,951.44</u>	<u>31,755.93</u>	<u>804.49</u>
Historic Plaques Provision	( 1,284.00)	( 247.60)	1,036.40
<b>Net Current Assets</b>	<u>29,667.44</u>	<u>31,508.33</u>	<u>1,840.89</u>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<u>29,667.44</u>	<u>31,508.33</u>	<u>1,840.89</u>

Honorary Treasurer

  
 Date 28/11/17

18/11/2017

Honorary Examiner

  
 Date 28/11/17



### Nominations for Election to the Executive Committee 2018

All roles are 'honorary' and voluntary and we also value the contributions made by our President, The Bishop of Bath and Wells, the Rt Revd Peter Hancock, and Vice Presidents Roger Cookman & Rod Hudsmith.

The following Officers are willing to stand for re-election:

- Chair – Chris Winter
- Vice-Chair – Philip Welch
- Hon Treasurer – Rodney Angel
- Hon Secretary – John Rackham
- Membership Secretary – Clare Blackmore

The following members of the Executive Committee are willing to stand for re-election:

- Graham Barrow
- Patrick Brown
- Rosemary Evans
- Andrew Fawcett
- Adrian l'Anson

Hilary Waters and Doug Robinson were co-opted during the year and are willing to stand for election.

If you would like to nominate someone or to stand for election yourself, please ensure that all sections of this form are completed and return it to the address below.

Name of person being nominated: .....

Name of Proposing Member: .....

Signature of Proposing Member: ..... Date: .....

Name of Seconding Member: .....

Signature of Seconding Member: ..... Date: .....

Signature of person being nominated, signifying acceptance of both the nomination and recognition of their responsibilities as a Charity Trustee if elected:

Signed: ..... Date: .....

**Please return completed form to Chris Winter, WCS Chair at:  
23 New Street, Wells, BA5 2LE or [chris.f.winter@btinternet.com](mailto:chris.f.winter@btinternet.com)**



**Annual General Meeting  
7.30 pm 11<sup>th</sup> January 2017**

**Agenda**

- 1. Welcome**
- 2. Apologies for absence**
- 3. Minutes of the AGM held on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016**
- 4. Chair's report**
- 5. Hon Treasurer's report**
- 6. Membership Secretary's report**
- 7. Planning Group report**
- 8. Environment Report**
- 9. Plaques Scheme report**
- 10. Election of Officers and Executive Committee for 2017**
- 11. Appointment of Independent Examiner for 2017**
- 12. AOB**





## Annual Report 2016

### Chair's report

I am pleased to be able to report on another year in which the civic society has grown in membership and profile as well as the number of projects in Wells to which we contribute.

I am very grateful to members of the committee who take on a variety of roles which helps us to achieve this. In particular vice chair Philip Welch for his work on the plaque awards, Wells in Mosaic and the Neighbourhood Plan; Adrian l'Anson and Graham Barrow for their work on planning issues, including the Neighbourhood Plan, their expertise is invaluable; Ray Bennett, Rod Hudsmith and Rosemary Evans for their vigilance on environmental issues; Andrew Fawcett for his contribution to tourism, marketing and membership recruitment; Patrick Brown for his liaison with the Bishop's Barn project and local listing; Clare Blackmore for her help and support on a number of activities as well as her role as Membership Secretary; and John Rackham and Rodney Angel as our Honorary Secretary and Treasurer.

There have been some notable events for us during 2016:

- we were a strong voice in the campaign to retain the post office in Market Place;
- members enjoyed a very successful visit to Bridgwater in August, hosted by the local society; and
- a summer evening social get together at the Deanery Gardens in June;
- we made a significant contribution to Heritage Open Day in September, displaying some of our millennium images of the city in the Town Hall;

Our regular contribution to Wells in Bloom was enhanced this year with an award for school gardens as a memorial to David Nasmyth.

These activities, as well as those summarised below, help to increase our local profile which in turn encourages new members to join and ensure that the society will continue to thrive.

The support of the society is frequently sought by other organisations and projects. We are currently working with the city's tourism forum, particularly on improving the management of coach-based tourism and have been invited to contribute to the next major Museum 'City of Wells' project.

I continue to work with the Alliance of Historic cathedral Cities and Towns (ACT), the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Civic Societies, and in October I was elected to the board of trustees of Civic Voice (the umbrella organisation for civic societies). These activities help to make sure that our voice is heard at a national level as well as giving us access to planning and policy information, to inform our activities and decisions.

We have had some wonderful speakers this year (as always!), entertaining and informing us on a wide range of subjects – community radio, our 'dementia-friendly city', the village grocer, the local fire brigade, Wells in Mosaic, cider and chocolate. Quite a variety. My thanks to all of the speakers and those who helped to put the programme together. And finally a big 'thank you' to Richard Hanks for his faithful reporting of these events to the local newspaper.

Our website has not however been our greatest achievement of 2016, but this is being addressed and a new and much improved site, should be launched in the near future. Our thanks to Doug Robinson for his help with this.

We have a full programme of events in place up to the coming summer and will publish the 2017/18 programme later in the year.

### **Honorary Treasurer's report**

The financial situation remains stable. The certified end of year accounts (30/09/16) will be presented to the meeting.

### **Membership Report**

Membership is looking healthy. In January 2016 we had 170 members. Now we have reached 180, the highest for years.

We are asking members, where possible, to let us have their email addresses so that we can communicate more easily, save paper and the shoe leather of committee members.

### **Planning Report**

Members of the WCS committee continue to visit Wells Town Hall frequently to inspect planning applications and current appeals. The chair of the city council's planning committee, Councillor Norman Kennedy, said they really appreciate our input and would like more of it.

We are trying to encourage the owners of Kendrick Court at the bottom of New Street to replace the eyesore "temporary" woodwork with a cast iron gate. Philip Welch has approached the agents for the owners and Adrian l'Anson the owners themselves but so far they have only repaired part of the crenulated wall.

We have kept an eye on the Bishop's Brook housing development and remain vigilant in spotting unauthorised developments then bringing them to the attention of the Enforcement Team at Mendip.

The development on the Glastonbury Road has been closely watched and we are pleased that developers and builders have adhered to the conditions of the planning consent.

### **Neighbourhood Plan**

A group of committee members has been working on the Steering Group for more than three years, but Wells City Council dissolved this group on December 22<sup>nd</sup> and has now taken full responsibility for completing a final draft plan.

### **Environment report**

Shaun Plenty, an environmental consultant, was commissioned to prepare a detailed report on the waterways of Wells for the society. As well as reporting the general good condition of many of the waterways, it highlights problem and neglected areas of this intrinsic aspect of the city. The committee is considering a campaign to improve the waterways, by clearing rubbish and making them more attractive, with the support of the relevant landowners. We would like to hear from members who would like to become involved.

The condition of verges, trees and green spaces is continually monitored by the society, and we work with Mendip District Council to maintain the city's green environs.

### **Plaques report**

**Blue plaques:** Three have been installed over the last year. One for the film director of Hot Fuzz, Edgar Wright, was fixed on the Blue School reception wall. The second, next to the Swan Hotel's front door, commemorates famous people who have stayed there. The third records the Phillips photographic studio and shop at 10 Market Place (now part of the Crown Hotel). All received positive publicity for the society in the local media.

Blue plaque plans for 2017 include one for famous cricketer W G Grace at the Recreation Ground, where he was out for three in 1867, and one for the Bloody Assizes of 1685 at the Market Place.

**Indoor plaques** have been presented to Wells Film Centre and Protec, with both being covered by the Wells Journal. Do let us know if you would like to recommend a local business for a plaque.

### **Wells in Mosaic report**

This six-metre diameter mosaic, by mosaicist Ruth Ames-White, will be based on a street map of medieval Wells and will be a major work of art as well as a new tourist attraction and include a guide to the attractions of the city. The initiative is a joint project with Wells Rotary Club and will make a significant contribution to Wells into the future.

However, the trustees of the Bishop's Palace recently decided against allowing the mosaic to be located by the moat on one of the lawns in front of the palace. This follows 18 months of meetings with the palace's chief executive, the Church Commissioners and two presentations to the trustees.

The project team is extremely disappointed, as time and money has been lost, but we are currently exploring an alternative location which will enhance the space and become a focus for residents and visitors.

### **Tourism report**

*Visit by Coach* is a project we are supporting in co-operation with the Cathedral, Bishop's Palace, Tourist Information centre and the City Council Tourism Forum.

An independent consultant, Ian Jefferies, has been appointed to review existing arrangements for coaches visiting the city, and to make recommendations. Positive progress so far has been made, with suggestions including a meet-and-greet/farewell service, on-board video detailing attractions prior to arrival, driver incentives and new leafleting.

There are a number of recommendations to be considered and implemented when agreed.

*Reducing High Street Traffic:* agreement has been reached with the Chamber of Commerce, with the support of Sustainable Wells, to propose measures to restrict the unacceptably high level of through-traffic using the High Street.

Whilst acknowledging that total pedestrianisation is not appropriate, it is clear that a simple change in street signage at various points in the city would significantly reduce the amount of unnecessary traffic travelling through the main shopping street.

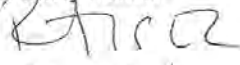
A detailed report on this matter was produced by the WCS some 3 years ago. All of the points covered are still relevant; if anything, the need for action is now even more urgent. Proposals will be put to the Somerset Highways Authority.

**Wells Civic**  
**Schedule of Income and Expenditure**  
**for the year ended 30 september 2016**

	2016	2015
<b>Income</b>		
WWW	-	-
Neighbourhood Plan	-	820.00
Subscriptions	1,434.00	1,343.00
Gift Aid	338.43	-
Interest Scottish Widows	19.59	21.10
Harry Parkes Bequest	655.73	554.87
Donations	106.60	119.00
Xmas	125.00	293.00
Summer	-	-
Other	-	100.00
Mosaic Project	-	-
Plaques	216.00	-
Revaluation of funds	1,621.13	247.97
	<u>4,516.48</u>	<u>3,504.04</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Website	61.20	120.70
Neighbourhood Plan	-	20.87
WWW	-	90.00
Rent	357.60	466.60
Expenses	70.38	99.25
Printing	237.00	446.89
Donations	1,309.49	200.00
Plaques	216.00	25.00
Chairs Travel	365.53	-
Summer	145.35	-
Xmas	90.41	317.33
Insurance	134.50	184.00
Boyne Memorial Trees	-	558.95
Mosaic	282.40	-
Waterways	282.40	-
Other	-	371.51
	<u>3,552.28</u>	<u>2,901.10</u>
Surplus	964.22	602.94

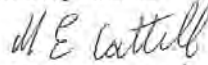
	2016		
	Opening Balance	Closing Balance	Variation
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Current a/c	3,335.25	2,452.75	( 882.50)
Unprocessed receipts and payments	-	-	-
Nat West Bank	3,335.25	2,452.75	( 882.50)
CAF Fixed Interest Fund B	9,457.64	9,893.05	435.41
CAF UK Equity Fund B	12,515.30	13,701.02	1,185.72
Scottish Widows Deposit	4,885.03	4,904.62	19.59
Debtors	10.00	-	( 10.00)
<b>Current Assets</b>	<b>30,203.22</b>	<b>30,951.44</b>	<b>748.22</b>
Historic Plaques Provision	( 1,500.00)	( 1,284.00)	216.00
<b>Net Current Assets</b>	<b>28,703.22</b>	<b>29,667.44</b>	<b>964.22</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>28,703.22</b>	<b>29,667.44</b>	<b>964.22</b>

Honorary Treasurer



Date 29/11/16

Honorary Examiner



Date 29/11/16



**Nominations for Election to the Executive Committee 2017**

All roles are 'honorary' and voluntary and we also value the contributions made by our President, The Bishop of Bath and Wells, the Rt Revd Peter Hancock, and Vice Presidents Roger Cookman & Rod Hudsmith.

The following Officers are willing to stand for re-election:

- Chair – Chris Winter
- Vice-Chair – Philip Welch
- Hon Treasurer – Rodney Angel
- Hon Secretary – John Rackham
- Membership Secretary – Clare Blackmore

The following members of the Executive Committee are willing to stand for re-election:

- Graham Barrow
- Ray Bennett
- Patrick Brown
- Rosemary Evans
- Andrew Fawcett
- Adrian l'Anson

If you would like to nominate someone or to stand for election yourself, please ensure that all sections of this form are completed and return it to the address below.

Name of person being nominated: .....

Name of Proposing Member: .....

Signature of Proposing Member: ..... Date: .....

Name of Seconding Member: .....

Signature of Seconding Member: ..... Date: .....

Signature of person being nominated, signifying acceptance of both the nomination and recognition of their responsibilities as a Charity Trustee if elected:

Signed: ..... Date: .....

**Please return completed form to Chris Winter, WCS Chair at:  
23 New Street, Wells, BA5 2LE or [chris.f.winter@btinternet.com](mailto:chris.f.winter@btinternet.com)**



**Annual General Meeting  
7.30 pm 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016**

**Agenda**

- 1. Welcome**
- 2. Apologies for absence**
- 3. Minutes of the AGM held on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2015**
- 4. Chair's report**
- 5. Hon Treasurer's report**
- 6. Membership Secretary's report**
- 7. Planning Group report**
- 8. Environment Report**
- 9. Plaques Scheme report**
- 10. Election of Officers and Executive Committee for 2016**
- 11. Appointment of Independent Examiner for 2016**
- 12. AOB**



WELLS CIVIC SOCIETY

## Annual Report 2015

### Chair's report

We have had a very varied programme of evening activities over the last year with some superb speakers and interesting topics. These ranged from the successes of young readers and writers to public art and contemporary art, local historic characters, remembering the role of Wellsenians in the First World War and last month's celebration of local cheeses. We have much more to come too through to the summer.

We have been pleased to welcome a number of new members this year, including some corporate members with whom we hope to develop some mutually beneficial ideas.

We were very sad to lose a stalwart of the Civic Society in the summer. David Nasmyth had been contributing generously to the Society longer than most people could remember. He was our 'tree man' and will be greatly missed.

Among our other activities have been:

- ❖ The planting and dedication by our President, Bishop Peter Hancock, of the Boyne Memorial Trees on 27<sup>th</sup> April;
- ❖ Market stalls on 16<sup>th</sup> May and 16<sup>th</sup> September to help to raise our profile;
- ❖ I attended the meetings to establish and then to launch the Historic Cathedral Cities Alliance in London on 22<sup>nd</sup> May and at the Civic Voice annual convention in Bristol on 24<sup>th</sup> October; and on 15<sup>th</sup> December, as part of the steering group, to organise a national conference at Portcullis House on 8<sup>th</sup> March, the same day as a meeting of the All Party Parliamentary Group which has been set up to champion the issues.
- ❖ We were delighted to host a visit from members of the Bridgwater Society on 8<sup>th</sup> July;
- ❖ A display of some of our Millennium images of the City at Heritage Open Day on 12<sup>th</sup> September.

As well as our own events and projects, we support others too:

- ❖ a project led by Bridgwater College to clean up the waterways around Keward (which we hope might be continued to encompass more waterways in Wells)
- ❖ the ongoing projects regarding the future of the Bishop's Barn and play areas in Wells are very closely followed by the Civic Society and we have, and will continue to contribute to the consultations and discussions.
- ❖ the first late night Christmas shopping evening on 3<sup>rd</sup> December, led by the Wells Chamber of Commerce and Tourism; we not only contributed financially, but also organised a shop window competition and helped with the organisation.
- ❖ together with Wells Rotary Club we are working towards adding more commemorative plaques to those already established and
- ❖ with Wells Lions, we are developing a significant project – "Wells in Mosaic" - about which more below.

We continue to monitor planning applications and to contribute to the Wells Neighbourhood Plan, the City Centre and Tourism Forum and the Mendip Conservation Advisory Panel. We are consulted on planning issues (for instance the recent proposal for a Premier Inn on the edge of the City) and we act positively to maintain the overall care of the built environment of the City (for instance the shop sign above the Fone Shop in Sadler Street).

**My thanks** go to all members of the Committee who work very hard to make all this possible:

- ❖ Adrian, Graham and Patrick for all things planning;
- ❖ Ray for keeping an eye on environment issues;
- ❖ Philip for the plaques and the mosaic, and many of the photos which help to raise our profile;
- ❖ Clare for managing the membership and all the help she gives to me;
- ❖ John, our lovely Secretary; and
- ❖ Rodney, our Treasurer.
- ❖ Roger & Rod, our Vice-presidents, for their continuing support and interest;
- ❖ Also our very new (currently co-opted) member, Andrew, who has brought some fresh ideas and energy to the committee.

There are others too, who often go 'unsung': Richard Hanks for his reliable and lively reports to the Journal every month, and Steve Wilson who looks after the website for us.

.... **and 2016?** There is, of course, the published programme of evening events to look forward to, and we hope a return visit to Bridgwater. We have also been invited to the Deanery Garden in the summer. Many of the projects mentioned above are ongoing and I hope there will be more too, so that the Civic Society continues to take a very active part in the community of Wells.

*Chris Winter  
Chair*

### **Honorary Treasurer's report**

The financial situation remains stable. The certified end of year accounts (30/09/15) will be presented to the meeting.

### **Membership Report**

Numbers have remained constant with people both leaving and joining. We had two stalls in the Market Place to promote the society which were relatively successful and a pitch in the Town Hall for Heritage Open Day which gained new members.

Letters have been sent to companies in Wells and we have gained three new corporate members, Rock House Dental Practice, Beech Tyldesley and Pilgrim Financial Services.

Chris, Andrew and I have had meetings to look at strategy for recruiting new members and this is very much at the forefront of work for the coming year.

We are asking members, where possible, to let us have their email addresses so that we can do more through this medium of communication and save paper and the shoe leather of committee members.

*Clare Blackmore*

### **Planning Report**

Members of the WCS committee have continued to visit the Town Hall weekly to inspect planning applications and current appeals.



Where appropriate we have made representations to the planning officers at Mendip District Council, with some success. Notable amongst these was the scheme to extend Ritchie House, part of the Cathedral School. Following our objections, and those from others, suitable amendments have been made and an acceptable scheme has recently been approved. Our objections to the large housing scheme on the edge of Wells, which would have linked Wells and Haybridge, were acknowledged and the scheme refused planning permission. However an appeal has been lodged and a Public Inquiry is scheduled for March 2016, when our concerns will be reiterated, despite some changes having been made to the layout. Copies of WCS's representations on planning applications can be found on the Society's website.

As many of you will know we lost an invaluable and knowledgeable committee member last summer with the sudden death of David Nasmyth. David was our "tree man" and we relied upon his knowledge to comment on proposals for tree felling and pruning. His shoes will be hard to fill but we look forward to welcoming someone to take on this advisory role.

We remain vigilant in spotting unauthorised developments and bringing them to the attention of the Enforcement Team at Mendip. Many of you will know of the long drawn out wrangle concerning the inappropriate shop sign on Sadler Street, which happily has recently been resolved with a new sign appearing on the phone shop.

A group of committee members is also involved in the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan for Wells, but progress is slow and there are many obstacles to be overcome before a final draft plan is completed.

*Graham Barrow*

## **Environment report**

The Bishop's Palace moat area has been much improved. The path on the south east side of the moat has been resurfaced and new railings separate this area from the open land. The fence on the moat side of the path is planned to be replaced during 2016.

The willows on the moat bank which have previously been pollarded and are now very overgrown will be removed. There is also now a rolling programme for the maintenance of the moat benches.

As reported at the last AGM, Bridgwater College wished to become involved in the restoration of those parts of the Wells waterways most in need. They concentrated on the length of the Keward Brook which forms the southern boundary of the playing fields off the Glastonbury Road. This part was heavily overgrown and the flow of water was inhibited by fallen branches and rubbish. The brook is now flowing very freely. Our thanks are due to the staff and students involved.

The brook then continues its journey south through the new Crest Nicholson housing development where it has been pleasantly landscaped.

*Ray Bennett*

## **Plaques report**

**Blue plaques:** I have ordered the acrylic plaque for Edgar Wright at the Blue School from Signefex (formerly Frome Signs). Once it arrives I will take it to Mendip and see if they are willing to give such plaques planning permission for listed buildings. Acrylic plaques are a third of the price of metal plaques and are widely used nowadays by the AA, RAC, good food guides and hotel chains.

Once I have Mendip's guidance I will apply for planning permission on behalf of the Swan Hotel. May I formally thank Patrick for his drawing of the Swan frontage which Mendip will require.

I hope to entice Edgar Wright to Wells in the first half of 2016. I understand he has a new film coming out in March, so hopefully he might find time for his home city after that.

I have also spoken to Adrian Lawrence at the Crown of Wells and suggested a blue plaque for photographer Bert Phillips might be appropriate for the Market Place frontage of the Grape and Bean, which is where Bert had his studio. Wells owes a great debt to Bert for his wonderful photographic archive. Previous discussions with Adrian and his marketing guru Sara Blair indicated that their only famous guests were current celebrities like Jonathan Ross, actors in Hot Fuzz who have their own plaque, and William Penn who also has his own (if inaccurate) plaque.

**Indoor plaques:** Robert and Sarah Powell were delighted with the plaque we presented to their shoe shop and pleased that the Wells Journal published our report. However they were disappointed that the paper did not use our photo of the presentation. I suggested they write a letter to the editor thanking the civic society with the unpublished photo. This they did and the Journal printed the letter two weeks later but without the photo.

The next two long-standing independent Wells businesses I will approach about receiving an indoor plaque are Wells Film Centre and Thatchers of Queen Street.

*Philip Welch*

### **Mosaic report**

Wells Civic Society has made a £250 pump-priming grant to the *Wells in Mosaic* project which will create a six-metre diameter mosaic by the moat on one of the lawns in front of the Bishop's Palace. It will be based on a street map of medieval Wells, act as a new tourist attraction and include a guide to the attractions of the city.

*Philip Welch*

### **Bishop's Barn update**

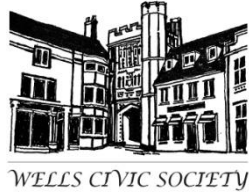
The Advisory Board to the Wells Recreation Ground Trust will present a management plan to Mendip District Council late in December, with a view to enabling a new Trust to be established early in 2016. The Barn thereafter it is hoped will, under the aegis of the Somerset Buildings Preservation Trust, be suitably restored to become available for multiple use by the citizens of Wells and others, in accordance with the wishes of the original Trust of 1887.

*Patrick Brown  
Member of Advisory Board*

### **Local Listing update**

Preparatory work has been done for the proposed Local List, and we wait upon reaction from MDC to enable us to follow up as required.

*Patrick Brown*



**Nominations for Election to the Executive Committee 2016**

All roles are 'honorary' and voluntary and we also value the contributions made by our President, The Bishop of Bath and Wells, the Rt Revd Peter Hancock, and Vice Presidents Roger Cookman & Rod Hudsmith.

The following Officers are willing to stand for re-election:

- Chair – Chris Winter
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- Hon Secretary – John Rackham
- Membership Secretary – Clare Blackmore

The following members of the Executive Committee are willing to stand for re-election:

- Graham Barrow
- Ray Bennett
- Patrick Brown
- Adrian l'Anson

Andrew Fawcett was co-opted by the Committee during the year, and is willing to stand for the coming year.

If you would like to nominate someone or to stand for election yourself, please ensure that all sections of this form are completed and return it to the address below to arrive by January 8<sup>th</sup> 2016.

Name of person being nominated: .....

Name of Proposing Member: .....

Signature of Proposing Member: ..... Date: .....

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23 New Street, Wells, BA5 2LE or [chris.f.winter@btinternet.com](mailto:chris.f.winter@btinternet.com)**



## *Annual Report 2014*

### **Chair's report**

It certainly has been a very interesting and busy first year as Chair and I am extremely grateful for all the support that I have had from members - especially committee members who take on particular roles, and all the members who come and support our events on a monthly basis.

We've taken part in a lot of activities in the city this year as well as taking on our own projects which we will be progressing in the coming year as well.

We continue to be involved in many aspects of life in the city: planning – the built and natural environment, cultural events, the visitor economy, and the sustainability of the city.

But these for me have been some of the highlights of the year:

Civic Society members played a key part in the campaign to retain the Bishop's Palace as the actual residence for the incoming Bishop. We are also delighted that **Bishop Peter Hancock** has agreed to be our President and was, with his wife Jane, able to join us for our Christmas event last month. I have received a very nice hand written 'thank you' note from Bishop Peter.

Committee members were very active in the consultation process for the Mendip Local Plan and, in January in partnership with the City Council, we began the **Neighbourhood Plan** process. This has enabled us to engage widely with all sectors of the City's residents, businesses and key organisations. We aim to launch a draft Plan for further consultation next month.

**Young people** are vital to the City's future and, as last year, we continue to engage in a number of ways. The children's event "Weird & Wonderful Wells" not only brought 2500 people to the City centre on a Sunday but also brought together many organisations in Wells.

We were also pleased to support the WW1 Anthology produced by the children of the Bookworms group, lead by Siobhan Goodwin, with workshops in school and I was delighted to be invited to the presentation event held in the Town Hall in November.

**Tourism** is vital to the economy of the City and working with VisitSomerset and Mark Tobin at the Swan Hotel, the Society was able to host a visit of Italian tour operators in March and take part in the first ever Tourism Expo in October, which attracted tour operators from all over the UK and the world!

**Heritage Open Day** is an important opportunity to raise the profile of the City and we were able to provide an exhibition of the millennium photos of Wells in the Town Hall as part of this event.

**The Bishop's Barn and the Recreation Ground**, as well as other play areas, are a very important part of the City's history and its future. Representatives of the Civic Society are playing an active part in the plans for future developments.

It is vital that these activities do not go unnoticed. Not from a sense of pride, (although we are proud of some of our achievements!) but in order to attract wider involvement and more new members. We do this by ensuring regular coverage in the Wells Journal – and I am very grateful to Richard Hanks for his tireless reporting of our evening events; we produced newsletters in April and September and the website has also been given a new lease of life. Thanks to Steve Wilson for his help with this.

We do hope to increase membership and would ask you to spread the word and invite friends to join us.

In order to take forward some of these projects we have made financial investments, with contributions to other organisations' projects and our own. More details of these are reported by Committee members below.

I look forward to another busy year ahead and thank you again for your continuing support.

*Chris Winter*

### **Planning and environment**

The Civic Society continues to inspect and to review incoming Planning Applications relating to premises and sites in the City of Wells; when considered appropriate or necessary, constructive comments and recommendations are made to Mendip District Council as the Local Planning Authority, and to Wells City Council as a Statutory Consultee in the Planning process. Copies of our Letters are available for Members to view on the Society's web-site.

The recently-installed Fascia ('Fone Care') in the lower part of Sadler Street has caused much concern locally. Mendip District Council recently produced new "Shop Front Guidance", and their 'Planning Enforcement Officer' has been asked to visit and to inspect.

Re-surfacing of the area of Moat Walk between the top of Silver Street and Tor Street has recently been completed, and new fencing installed alongside the bank of the adjacent stream.

Our very grateful thanks are due to the unremitting (and ultimately successful!) efforts of our Vice-President Roderick Hudsmith.

*Roger K. Cookman*

The Moat Walk works was only addressed properly after I had appealed directly to the Church Commissioners' See Houses and Estates division and met their manager in September 2013. Happily most of the work has been completed with the walkway resurfaced very professionally; the ditch cleared and care of the benches returned to a rolling programme of maintenance. The moat bank adjacent to the walkway has yet to be cleared of the over-grown epicormic growth of the willows, brambles etc. I am trusting Cheryl Norton of MDC to ensure this is done. Last Autumn I met her on site in company with Landscape Group's manager to discuss the issue. Until May MDC and its contractor are still responsible.

A new contract is to be set up and we shall learn in due course who has been appointed. Rather like the mantra in Mastermind "I have started so I will finish" and will keep a watchful eye on developments but in future Ray should be handling environmental matters generally.

*Rod Hudsmith*

Bridgwater College is very interested in being involved in the restoration of the waterways in our city which are very much in need of care and attention. We have a proposal which identifies the work required which would be carried out on a voluntary basis but would need the purchase of some equipment.

Having only recently received this proposal your committee has yet to consider it in detail. However we are of the view that our waterways are in dire need of restoration and continued upkeep as befits our beautiful city.

*Ray Bennett*

### **Membership Secretary's Report**

The Society currently has 157 ordinary members, 9 life members, 5 corporate and 1 honorary member. Eight new members joined in 2014.

We collect Gift Aid from 73 members' fees and hope to ensure that this is maximised in the coming year.

42 members pay by standing order; in order to make payment easier for members and the officers we will be investigating the possibility of introducing direct debit payments.

In 2015 we also aim to:

- increase membership by a higher local profile;
- attract members through our activities, a stall on the market and increased use of publicity through the Wells Journal and face to face contact;
- pursue the idea of offering Edgar Wright the Freedom of the City of Wells.

The AGM is asked to discuss the idea of increasing the membership fee and to increase the number of members making bank payments and signing the Gift Aid form.

*Clare Blackmore*

### **Programme Secretary's Report**

The programme for 2014 was very varied and attracted quite a few visitors as well as our regular members.

- **January's** AGM was followed by 'The history of Wells through local memorabilia' with Wells Archivist Dr Julia Wood.
- David Cotton talked about 'Farming and the need for diversification' in **February**.
- In **March** Stephen Clare Director of Holy Well Glass shares his expertise and experience, well known through his work on the Jesse Window in the Wells Cathedral.
- 'Blooming Wells' in **April** was brought to us by Non Hobson & Jenny Jones of the Wells and District Floral Art Society.
- In **May**, Neil Mantell and Blue School student Simon talked about their Learn to Lead work and how it might be possible for them and other students to engage better with their city's heritage and stewardship.
- In **June**, Simon Tudway Quilter spoke to us about his family home, Milton Lodge – the House and Gardens which has been an important landmark and an integral part of the landscape of the City since the 18<sup>th</sup> century.
- After our summer break the programme resumed in **October** with organisers of the many festivals which make the City so vibrant talked about their successes and future plans.
- Judith Ludovino, Managing Director of the Mendip Hub, explained 'How young business has a place in Wells' at the **November** meeting.
- APPLE CHRISTMAS! was our festival event in **December** - an evening of cider tasting and celebration with Orchard Pig, and Special Guest, The Rt Revd Peter Hancock, Bishop of Bath and Wells and his wife Jane.

The talks up to December have all been successful, with a bit of a disaster thwarted for the Christmas event, and events are in place for the spring and summer months.

I will be asking the committee to consider whether we should rebook the Wells Museum for events going forward from June.

*Kirstie Harris*

### **Wild flowers and Tree Report**

We continue to review all planning applications for tree work in the city.

The trees to be planted in the Bishop's Fields to commemorate Colin and Rosemary Boyne were planted during March. Unfortunately, because of early delivery from Belgium to our supplier the trees did not survive their move and after a short period they both died.

The good news is that our supplier has agreed to replace the trees. Because of the long warm autumn we delayed delivery of the trees until December. They have now been delivered and are planted temporarily in a quiet corner of the Palace Gardens. They should be planted in their final positions early in the New Year. They will need much stronger protection than the last trees as James informs me that the farmer's cows have flattened the guards which he provided last time. I have researched suitable protection, which James tells me will have to remain in place for many years. I am currently pricing the necessary materials. With the labour to put it in place it will come to some hundreds of pounds.

We have been approached by the Museum curator to help them with the management of their magnolia grandiflora, sited at the front of the museum by the Harry Parkes memorial. The tree needs pruning once again. Having obtained estimates for this work, the museum management have no funds at the moment and have been minded to fell the tree. I suggested we should try to get a local estimate from a reliable source and that your committee was minded to help them. We are suggesting that we will match any funds they can raise for this purpose. When we have the estimate we will move forward.

*David Nasmyth*

### **Plaque report**

In Spring 2014 a working party looked at the possibilities of creating more plaques in Wells. Three different types are being considered:

#### Historic buildings plaques

After some research, a list of proposed sites has been drawn up including: The Liberty (by Deanery or Cedars), New Street, St Thomas Street and Chamberlain Street. The cost is likely to be about £350 each but Wells Rotary Club is willing to pay half.

Three existing Wells Civic Society/Wells Rotary Club plaques have been re-fixed by the Frome Sign Company and the plaque on Barclays Bank in Wells Market Place, which was removed during building work, has been replaced.

#### Famous people blue plaques

A long list of possible candidates has been compiled and Mark Tobin of the Swan Hotel helped to compile a list of famous guests who have stayed there, including Winston Churchill, John Rockefeller and a host of modern entertainers like Robbie Williams. Mark is prepared to fund a plaque saying "Guests at the Swan Hotel have included...". He has also loaned us the Swan's visitors' book from 1963-1977 to identify more famous guests.

We are investigating the possibility of placing a plaque at 42 Southover, the house where film director Edgar Wright lived in Wells.

Wells archivist Julia Wood has joined the team and is helping to provide information about possible candidates for blue plaques.

The next stage will be to draw up a shortlist of candidates for the Committee to make a decision.

#### Indoor plaques

A plaque was presented to Michelle Machin of Whittings of Wells on May 15 and this was reported by the Wells Journal and other media, and is displayed in the shop.

Suggestions for other traders deserving an indoor plaque are welcome.

#### Idea for Wells City Map including a plaque trail

Wells Lions are keen to work with us on an artwork to be sited between the Bishop's Eye and the drawbridge of the Bishop's Palace. The mosaic could be turned into a City Trail including information about the city's history and all the plaques with a challenge - "can you find each of these plaques around Wells?" A map could also be made available to visitors to encourage exploration. This would require partnership funding from local organisations and private donors.

Ruth Ames-White, a mosaic artist from Wells, agreed that a circular mosaic about nine metres in diameter could incorporate a swan shape around a map of the historic city centre with the tourist attractions marked. It would lie level with the grass to facilitate the mowing and be strong enough to take a heavy vehicle (not that this would be encouraged). The cost is likely to be £20,000-£25,000.

Rosie Martin at the Bishop's Palace supports the proposal, as does Bishop Peter Hancock, in principle. The Church Commissioners, the land owners, recently also agreed to the proposal.

The Committee will consider the proposal further and a funding package will need to be agreed.

*Philip Welch*

*A finance report will be presented at the AGM.*

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### **Programme of evening events 2015**

14 January 2015: AGM and Plans for International Women's Day – Sarah Briton

11 February 2015: Democracy and Community Action - Mel Usher, Leader, Frome Town Council and Cllr Peter MacFadyen

11 March 2015: Investing in young readers and writers - Siobhan Goodwin and representatives of Wells Bookworms, with local writer and illustrator, Rebecca Gryspeerdt.

8 April 2105: Public Art in Wells - Local artists lead a discussion about the role of public art in the community and our legacy for the future of Wells

13 May 2015: The role of the Bishop's Barn in Wells - past, present and future

10 June 2015: Celebrating the characters of Wells and the Civic Society's commemorative plaques - Clare Blackmore, Wells Journal & Wells Civic Society

*All meetings will be held at the Wells Museum at 7.30pm  
visitors are very welcome and are asked for a contribution of £2.*

[www.wellscivicsociety.org.uk](http://www.wellscivicsociety.org.uk)



**Wells Civic Society Committee Members  
2014**

|                 |                      |
|-----------------|----------------------|
| Rodney Angel    | Honorary Treasurer   |
| Graham Barrow   |                      |
| Ray Bennett     |                      |
| Clare Blackmore | Membership Secretary |
| Patrick Brown   |                      |
| Roger Cookman   | Vice President       |
| Kirstie Harris  | Programme Secretary  |
| Rod Hudsmith    | Vice President       |
| Adrian l'Anson  |                      |
| David Nasmyth   | Trees & wildflowers  |
| John Rackham    | Honorary Secretary   |
| Philip Welch    | Deputy Chair         |
| Chris Winter    | Chair                |

[www.wellscivicsociety.org.uk](http://www.wellscivicsociety.org.uk)