



CHURCHGATE AREA ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER No 60 Spring 2018

The Association promotes the interests of all residents and businesses, not only in Churchgate Street, but also in the general area of all those streets that lead off it.

**Do join us for the April Social
which will be held on
Friday 20 April at 7.00pm
at The Unitarian Meeting House, Churchgate Street**

We will be amused by the well-known story teller, Charlie Haylock, who is one of Suffolk's leading entertainers. His informative and hilarious one-man shows are legendary in the county and his books have all been best sellers.

Wine and canapés will be served after the meeting

CAR PARKING IN THE GRID: IS THIS SOMETHING WE CAN INFLUENCE?

Perhaps you may be aware that St Edmundsbury is one of the last locations in the UK where enforcement of parking restrictions on the 'highways' are still the responsibility of the Police and not the local authority. If you are, then you may also know that the planned transfer of this responsibility to the Council has now been delayed and will not happen until 2019. You may also be aware that the Council has helped fund a single police person to undertake this duty for about 9 months now. There are those who may believe that this has seen little improvement of the situation in the 'Grid'.

What is clear, and what we all experience every day, is the blatant and wilful disregard of the legal requirements for parking vehicles applied to the streets in the 'Grid'. We all see the results of this with heavy lorries and other traffic having to mount pavements and threaten the historic buildings of our wonderful town, and those with the legitimate right to park unable to do so due to the selfish disregard of others who could and should leave their vehicles in the car parks. There are those who, it seems, believe the double yellow lines are for decorative effect only, and that pedestrians and those with buggies and mobility scooters can take their chance in the road so long as motorists are able to leave their vehicle where it is most convenient for them.

The CAA has debated this issue for a very long time with the sense of frustration that nothing ever seems to improve and, indeed if anything, things are now worse than ever. The Police do not see traffic and parking as their priority and will not increase their efforts by applying any further resources to the issue. Only the one officer who we pay for will be undertaking any enforcement and even she is not fully dedicated. The CAA Committee wondered if there are some people in the 'Grid' who are motivated and fired up enough to campaign on this single issue.

If you are someone who feels so motivated please do contact Peter Riddington on:
p.riddington@outlook.com

CCTV camera to be placed on the corner of Churchgate Street and Whiting Street and the ongoing problems with our pavements

CCTV camera Over the last two years there has been an increase in anti-social behaviour in Whiting Streets, North and South, which has been the cause of much unhappiness and distress amongst the inhabitants of these streets.

Our Borough Councillor, Andrew Speed, has obtained funding from the Town Council of £684 which will be put towards the installation of a CCTV camera on the corner of Churchgate Street and Whiting Street. Naturally, the camera will not be watched all the time but we hope that, if there is an incident, then the Police will be able to track down the perpetrators.

Pavements Andrew has asked John Griffiths, Leader of St. Edmundsbury Borough Council, to form a partnership with the Town Council to address the need to resurface some of the pavements in the cartilage of the Town Council. John Griffiths agreed to this on 02.12.17 and we had hoped that work would start early this year, but Andrew has just told me that they are still awaiting revised quotes for the work and that the Borough have not yet committed. If the state of the pavements is something that you feel strongly about please contact Andrew on: Andrew.Speed@stedsbc.gov.uk VGF



Following on from the Christmas Newsletter here is a photo of Baby William with parents Annabel Mayer and Ben Miller

So What's Going Off at the Abbey Site?

It's now some time since the St Edmundsbury Council and the Cathedral got together to create a unique body which is called the Abbey Heritage Partnership. This group was set up in the first instance to plan for the conservation and better presentation and understanding of the site of the former Abbey and has now several committees trying to manage both the studies which are the primary initial activity of the partnership and, in addition, plan for and organise the celebrations which will mark the Millennium celebration of the founding of the Abbey by King Canute in 1020.

Two studies have so far been commissioned and these are being funded by Historic England:

- A 'Heritage Assessment' of the entire 60 acre site of the Abbey, including the obvious parts of the Abbey Gardens but also No Man's Meadow and the Crankles and, the areas of the former Parks Department Yard off Eastgate. This study will look at the existing documentation and site evidence and will set out an explanation of the significance of the site and its component parts. Much has already been done in gathering the information which will advise this.
- A 'Conservation Management Plan' which will investigate the issues which threaten and undermine what is significant about the Abbey site and will also set out proposals to better reveal the significance of the site as a series of projects.

One of the first projects we hope to proceed with is to help fulfil a long term ambition of many, including Historic England, to relocate the tennis courts away from their current location adjacent to the ruins. This

ambition would result in the setting of the ruins being greatly enhanced and allow archaeological exploration of what was the monk's graveyard, an area never previously investigated.

Having seen early plans and images of the Abbey Site, what is interesting is quite how the ruins have been made more and more legible since the 18th C. We are proposing to continue this process ensuring the remains of what was, in the 15th C, the largest ecclesiastical building in northern Europe, are properly understood and interpreted for those of us who are privileged to live and/or work here in and of course our many visitors.

I can't write a piece about the Partnership without mentioning our CAA member, friend and neighbour Richard Summers without whom the partnership would need to employ any number of professional planning advisors and administrators. Richard's enthusiasm for the project and his dazzling professional and organisational skills keep us all focussed and heading in the right direction. While the Cathedral and the Borough have provided an organisational framework (and premises) it is enthusiastic people who like Richard are giving their time and knowledge for free who are actually managing the exercise, including the necessary fund raising.

The Abbey of St Edmund is of fundamental importance to our town. Had it not been constructed Bury St Edmunds would not exist, certainly not in the form it is now. Martin Taylor summed it up well for me when he pointed out that had the Abbey survived Bury St Edmunds would be a city the size of Norwich now- it makes you think!

So do look out for further information about the next workshop day which should be in the next couple of months. This will concentrate on what the Heritage Assessment exercise has discovered about the Abbey site, it'll be good to see as many locals as possible at that event!

Peter Riddington

The Guildhall Restoration Update

On the Ground Floor the Banqueting Hall and Court Room are completed. The electrical works throughout have enhanced the elegance of these rooms. The electrical works in the porch are finished, with the ramp and oak/glass doors to arrive later. If you pass by, please admire the external stone repair works by the front doors. The oak and glass doors to the rear of the Guildhall leading out to the Kitchen courtyard have been fitted, allowing light to flood in and views out to the courtyard and garden.

On the First Floor the Ops Room has been painted in the original green and the room is now looking stunning. The Grey Room next door is complete and the interpretation windows have been installed, highlighting parts of the original fabric. The landing is currently being redecorated. Above the Banqueting Hall and adjoining Safe Room, the Gallery area has been enhanced with new lights and redecoration.

The set-works team are almost ready to mobilise on site. They will be positioning all the heritage related displays including heritage hubs and digital displays with the Banqueting Hall and courtroom. We plan a timeline of history within the lobby. The Tudor Kitchen will house information relating to food and drink, remedies and potions as well as herbs, spice and all things nice! The Grey Room will concentrate on WW11 themes and the Ops Room will be interpreted as an information and immersive room, showing how it was once operated by local men and women of Bury St. Edmunds.

To date the total project costs are £1,775,000 and a grant of £35,000 has been received from the Foyle Foundation towards the cost of redeveloping the Tudor Kitchen into the Educational learning space. The current shortfall is £29,000 and any interested donors are asked to contact Sarah on fundraising1@btinternet.com to discuss the possible options.

WHAT'S ON IN THE GRID

Bury Theatre Workshop present:

Animal Farm by George Orwell. Unitarian Meeting House. 12-14 April 7.30pm (+ matinee on 14 April)
Anger of Angels by John Goldman. Constitutional Club 19 April 7.30pm. UMH 21 April 2.30pm and 7.30pm

Good Time Jazz, in aid of Softpower Education. 22 April. Hunter Club. Contact: jwbayne@guildhallproperties.co.uk

LOCAL RICKSHAW RIDES

Starting this summer, Bury St. Edmunds Rickshaw will offer free rides to local people experiencing mobility problems and/or social isolation. The rickshaw is a specially adapted tricycle that carries two passengers at the front, and the idea is to give them an opportunity to get outside and enjoy the fresh air and interaction with others – the rider, and the passers-by. The riders will be suitably trained volunteers, and the rickshaw has a battery-powered motor to assist with the pedalling. Passengers will be picked up from their home or day centre and taken for a leisurely and chatty tour of the town.

The project is based on the *Cycling Without Age* scheme originating in Copenhagen, which is now popular in many towns and cities over the world. In the UK, a scheme in Falkirk proved so successful that it is being rolled out across Scotland. The Bury project differs in that it will cater for all ages, not just the elderly.



Elaine Channen, the manager of Gatehouse's Dementia Hub, which runs day care every weekday for up to 22 people at a time, believes the project will help people living with dementia and their carers. She said *"Our Clients are local people; they talk about the town, where they worked. When they are outside and the furniture warehouse at the back of the Hub is open they are delighted when people say hello. Some of our people don't get that interaction normally – it's a lifeline. They need something to look forward to, something to get out of bed for. I would awaken their senses again – sight, sound, smell. And fresh air is good for the appetite! Everyone loves flowers; wouldn't it be nice to see Bury In Bloom?"*

CAA member Libby Ranzetta, chair of BSE Rickshaw, said funding has now been secured from the Town and Borough Councils, including a grant from Councillor Jo Rayner and twenty people have already volunteered to ride the rickshaw. Libby would love to hear from anybody who can offer secure garaging for the machine in the town centre. To talk about garaging, supporting the project, making a referral or volunteering please contact 01284 725046 or bserickshaw@gmail.com Libby Ranzetta

Your Committee 2017/18

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