



FRIENDS of CASTLE GREEN

NEWSLETTER

Celebration - Education - Recreation
A Park for People!

Words from The Chair

I have recently written to Herefordshire Council (on your behalf) to register our interest in the beautiful Georgian building that currently houses the Council's training department and the Youth Service's canoe centre in the corner of Castle Green, next to the River Wye. Because the Council are currently developing a new accommodation strategy, it is likely that this building will be declared "surplus to requirements" by 2011 and, without firm proposals for its future, it could end up on the "disposals" list - a situation we should like to avoid!

Originally built during the Georgian period as an Art College, the building has suffered quite a lot of inappropriate development - the closing of the portico, the removal of the portico roof to make way for office space and the square brick extension stuck on to the wonderful Georgian facade! Informal discussions with Heritage Lottery lead the committee to believe that they would welcome a grant application for its restoration, putting it back into use for the benefit of the community as a whole. We envisage setting up a social enterprise to run a community cafe/restaurant, which in turn could provide employment and training for disadvantaged groups. The aim

Events for 2009

Summer Fayre on Saturday 27 June

The summer time fun on Castle Green starts with our Summer Fayre on Saturday 27 June, running from 10am - 10pm and will include various musical acts throughout the day and evening. There will be refreshments, including a bar, cafe, the Famous Tudge's hotdogs and many more gastronomic treats. Our craft market will showcase local crafts and produce and we hope to have plenty of things to keep children entertained throughout the afternoon, including our annual free puppet show.

Three Choirs Festival on Saturday 15 August

Our second big event of the year is on Saturday 15 August, when we join the final celebrations of the Three Choirs Festival, with music and dancing, whilst picnicking on the Castle Green. It's FREE to attend, so bring your rug & your picnic or buy from our in-house cafe. We finish at 7pm with a procession to the Cathedral to join "The Gathering Wave", the finale concert of the festival - a rare chance to see over 300 singers performing together in a beautiful setting.

Oddsocks Theatre Company - Richard III

After last year's roaring success, Oddsocks Theatre Company conclude our summer season with another open air performance of Shakespeare's Richard III. The final date is yet to be confirmed, but will be towards the end of August. Keep your eye on our notice board for details.



For information about any of our events, or to book a stall at the Summer Fayre, please contact Rebecca Saunders on 01432 272605 or email events@friendsofcastlegreen.org.uk

would be to trade at a profit to provide an income to maintain both the building and the Castle Green.

It would be a huge project for the Friends of Castle Green which we would not want to tackle alone. Potential partners to the project would include Hereford City Partnership and the City Council, but your backing and support will be crucial. Are there any Friends out there that would like the chance of planning an exciting new future for one of Castle Green's greatest assets? Anyone with community or property development experience would be particularly welcome, but anyone with energy and commitment to the vision would be worth their weight in gold - so please get in touch.

Finally, I should like to extend a warm welcome to Anthony Edwards who has recently joined the committee as Membership Secretary. He will be looking into standing order payments for our membership fees (still great value at £5 per year per household) - so I'm sure you will all be hearing from him soon enough! A big thank you to Anthony for shouldering this particular task!

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A Children's Wassail on the Castle Green - Christmas Fayre 2009

The Castle Green is a very special historic site and the Friends would like to offer an opportunity for local school children to visit and perform a Wassail festival as a dazzling finale to the Christmas Fayre 2009.

Wassailing is a unique tradition which is deeply embedded in our County's culture and history, having been performed here for many hundreds of years. Its primary purpose is to celebrate the past apple crop and promote a good harvest for next year, but there's a lot of fun to be had along the way!

Last year's Christmas Fayre was the most successful to date, between two and three thousand people joined us to buy local crafts and produce, whilst listening to local music makers and sampling delicious food and drink. The Friends would like to extend this event by running a Wassail project in local primary schools which will culminate in the participation of the children (and their families!) in their very own Wassail at the close of the Christmas Fayre. There will be singing, dancing, storytelling and the performance of a Mummers play, accompanied by much merry making and audience participation!

We hope to offer this opportunity to learn about local culture and traditions completely free of charge to local schools to ensure no one is excluded. So if you have a child at a local school give the head teacher a prod and tell them to get involved!

For more information on this project please contact Julie Orton-Davies on 01432 760772.

Your Views on Yews & Views!

The Committee have recently approached Herefordshire's Parks & Countryside service to see if they would have any objection to us applying to remove six small and stunted yew trees on the Castle Green. Ordinarily, we would not support the cutting down of trees, but in this instance we think this idea is worth pursuing, so we would like to know what you think.

The trees in question run from the gents' end of the toilet block for a few metres towards Castle Street. We think these were originally planted as a yew hedge, but unmaintained, they have grown into rather stunted poor specimens, as can be seen in the picture. What is of more importance is that they completely block the lovely view of the Cathedral.

We believe, by removing these few trees, not only will that path become a brighter more pleasant route to take, but it will also improve the "passive policing" of the green by allowing local residents a direct view on to the Castle Green from their houses. Naturally we would want to plant the resulting flower bed with smaller (non-view-blocking!) shrubs and perennials.

Take a good look at the pictures or take a wander on the green and let us know if you agree with our ideas. Without your input we will find it difficult to get the permission we need, so please contact us, whatever you think!

Email: chair@friendsofcastlegreen.org.uk

The Yew Trees Up For Removal



The View That Would Be Revealed

