

**WELLS CITY COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE ARCHIVES AND CIVIC ASSETS COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL**  
**CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, WELLS, AT 6:00PM ON THURSDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2014**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs: C Briton (The Mayor); T Butt Philip; A Gibson (Chairman); C Price;  
G Wilson (Deputy Mayor)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Town Clerk: F White, Archivist: Dr J Wood  
Cllr: N Kennedy. 1 member of the public

**13/63A APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**  
T Robbins; H Siggs; D Unwin

**13/64A DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**  
None declared

**13/65A MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 19<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2014** were  
proposed, seconded, approved and signed.

**13/66A MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**  
None wishing to speak

**13/67A REPORT FROM THE ARCHIVIST** To receive the Archivist's report to the Committee  
(attached) Noted.  
The Chairman particularly thanked the Archivist for all the work she does, especially on  
the events which have kept her very busy.  
It was agreed to try to include a visit to the Town Hall cells for Heritage Open Day next  
year.

**13/68A WELLS MUSEUM**

- i. Request to reproduce images of items from the City Archives:  
Wells and Mendip Museum wished to reproduce images of Archive items, printed on to  
post cards for sale. Approved with the conditions that the copyright of the City Council  
be acknowledged and that the proceeds be solely for the Museum Trust.
- ii. Archivist's role at the Museum:  
The Town Clerk reported on the submission made by the Museum to the Finance  
and General Purposes Committee the previous week, minute ref:14/105F.

**13/69A TOWN CRIER'S WINTER COAT**  
To approve cost of replacement: The quote for £750 was proposed, seconded and  
approved. It was further agreed that if necessary the Town Clerk and Chairman may  
order matching trousers for the Town Crier.

**13/70A CIVIC REVIEW** (attached)  
To adopt the revised Civic Review and make recommendation to Council.  
Some final amendments to the draft were agreed. It was proposed, seconded and  
agreed that the document be recommended to full Council for adoption.

**13/71A ANY OTHER MATTERS OF REPORT**

- i. The Town Clerk presented the list of order of seniority used for civic  
processions; this was checked and approved by the Committee.
- ii. Pictures: The Mayor and Archivist have inspected the pictures in the Town Hall  
archive, there is nothing of significance waiting to be hung.

**13/72A DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 6pm Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2015**  
**at the Museum (venue to be confirmed)**

## Report from the Archivist

### Wells Remembers

On 5<sup>th</sup> August, an exhibition to mark the start of the centenary of the Great War opened at Wells Town Hall. It focuses on the Council at War. It tells the stories of three Mayors of Wells and how the war impacted on them and their families. The part played by the City Council and the Town Hall is also illustrated, along with the impact of the war on the citizens of Wells, using contemporary documents preserved in the City Archives. Specially loaned artefacts such as a 'death penny' are also featured. The exhibition was created by the Archivist as part of 'Wells Remembers', a project to mark the centenary of the Great War. The project is being coordinated by a partnership between the Blue School and Wells Cathedral School, Wells Cathedral, the Bishop's Palace, Wells City Archives, the Wells Journal, the Wells branch of the Royal British Legion and the Wells & Mendip Museum. The project is supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

### 'Weird and Wonderful Wells'

On 17<sup>th</sup> August, the Town Hall took part in the children's history festival entitled 'Weird and Wonderful Wells'. Visitors were invited to the Town Hall, where they were greeted by the Town Crier, and met the Mayor in his Parlour. The Archivist (who was on the organising committee for the whole event) created a children's tour and quiz entitled 'Explore the Hairy Histories at Wells Town Hall'. There were an incredible 200 visitors to the Town Hall during the two hours it was open and all aspects of the tour proved very popular. The Council also lent the children's civic costumes for the occasion, but in the event they were not used.

### Heritage Open Day

Between 10.00 and 4.00 on 13<sup>th</sup> September, the whole of the Town Hall was open to the public for 2014 Heritage Open Days. This was the first time the Town Hall has participated on a Saturday and the event was a huge success, with a record number of visitors (372 in all), and this despite the fact that the Wells Journal did not run the advance press release.

The Archivist organised a large range of activities and displays. The 'History Map' allowed people to come and participate in building up the history of the city by sticking Postits on a large-scale map. Visitors were also able to find out about a digital mapping project called 'Know Your Place – West of England'. The Project Officer demonstrated how this will help people to explore their neighbourhood through historic maps, images and linked information. Another activity enjoyed by visitors was having a nostalgic stroll along Wells High Street in the year 2000. This was made possible by Wells Civic Society's loan of huge panoramic photos which were taken of the entire High Street to mark the Millennium. There were also films of local interest and exhibitions from the City Archives and by Wells Railway Fraternity and Janet and Peter James (the latter bringing to life some of the historical paintings). Visitors were offered a 'Self-Guided Tour of the Town Hall' created by the Archivist.

The event would not have been possible without the 13 volunteers who so kindly helped on the day. Many thanks to the Councillors who did such a wonderful job (the Mayor and Councillors Brandon, Kennedy, Price and Siggs), along with Mace-Bearer Jan Rood, Town Crier Len Sweales, and volunteers Peter Trueman, Andrew Tucker, Chris Webb, and three members of Wells Civic Society (Adrian l'Anson, Ray Bennett and Chris Winter).

### 'Know Your Place – West of England'

This project (mentioned above) is now applying for Stage 2 Heritage Lottery funding. The Archivist has arranged that, if this is granted, the unique 1860 Sewerage Map of Wells will be digitised as part of the project. She has also indicated that the City Archives would like to participate in the project.

### Talks

On 21<sup>st</sup> November, the Archivist will be giving a talk on the City Archives to the Somerset Churches Trust, and one on 5<sup>th</sup> December to the Wells Natural History and Archaeological Society.

### Conservation

Presentation boxes have now been made for the three twinning charters, and the first tranche of charters have been remounted in their cases by Mervyn Richens, Senior Conservator at Somerset Heritage Centre.

Dr Julia Wood  
30.09.2014