

## The Widcombe Association's AGM

will be held on

**Thursday, 14th April 7:30 pm  
at Widcombe Baptist Church**

Following the formal meeting there will be a

### Hustings

Local Councillors and Candidates for Local Elections will speak on the subject:

**'What I would do for Widcombe'**

opportunities for questions

*This is also a Social Occasion—wine & nibbles provided!*

**Guest tickets £3 (refunded if you join the WA on the night)**

### The Widcombe Association Committee (at 1 Apr 11)

**Richard Wales 311198**

Chairman

**Rosemary Emsley / Liz Littlewood 333044**

Secretary

**Jeremy Boss 484794**

Treasurer

**Paddy Doyle 311809**

Vice Chairman, Newsletter, Website

**Mayveen Blackwell 429729**

Membership Secretary, FoBRA liaison

**Andrew Gordon-Duff 480682**

Planning

**Sarah Lewis 315491**

Events

**Julian Williams 422761**

Traders' Liaison, Traffic & Highways

**Helen Peter 334936**

Streetscape

**Maggie Turner 338583**

Chair, Church St sub-cite

**Ann Ashworth 443907**

Asst Membership Sec

**Ozzie Ffield 314345**

Energy saving

**Chris Rogers 448171**

Email your Committee:

**Secretary@widcombeassociation.org.uk**

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# The Widcombe Association

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



Published by the Widcombe Association.

Chairman: Richard Wales, Violet Bank Farm, Prospect Rd, Bath BA2 6AY

Vice Chairman: Paddy Doyle, 86 Greenway Lane, Bath BA2 4LN



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## Chairman's Column Richard Wales

Since publication of the autumn Newsletter, the issue of the greatest importance, and which has taken up the most time, has been Rossiter Road. Unfortunately B&NES Council decided to hold their public consultation at precisely the time that I planned to be abroad on holiday. Needless to say, the holiday prevailed! Widcombe residents will have received the Council questionnaire and the Association's letter; also, many of you will have attended the public exhibition. The Association has made a formal response to the consultation and a summary is given elsewhere in this newsletter. The full text is available on the web site. To reach this stage has involved an enormous amount of work, including many meetings with Council officers and cabinet members. We are extremely fortunate in having such a well-qualified sub-committee who have found the time to deal with this issue. Mike Wrigley, with his planning expertise has been invaluable in developing the urban planning and public realm aspects of our response whilst Peter Hendy has, somehow, found time, from his demanding day job as the Mayor of London's Commissioner for Transport, to advise and help negotiate on our behalf. The battle continues, as we have to ensure that, not only is the scheme implemented without delay, but also proper regard is given to urban planning. Our message has always been that this not a high-ways engineering project but an important piece of urban renewal.

Another matter that keeps popping up is the Two Tunnels cycle route. Sustrans have resurrected the prospect of a major ramped access on allotment land in Lyncombe Vale. Greenway! and the WA agreed that a public consultation would be an appropriate way of dealing with this issue but Sustrans are now suggesting that a consultation event should be held in the City centre, as well as in Widcombe. Needless to say, we have objected strongly to this and a further meeting will be held in April before any final decisions are made.

Having served nearly three years as your Chairman, I shall be retiring at the AGM and shall not be seeking re-election. However, in view of the critical stage we have reached in the Rossiter Road saga, I shall, for the time being, be continuing as Chairman of the Rossiter Road sub-committee. My period on the Committee reminds me of the old Chinese curse – “may you live in interesting times”. In fact, there

have been many fascinating issues to review and discuss. Although this has resulted in a lot of hard work, with many voluminous B&NES Council documents to study, I have been most fortunate in having a good-humoured committee team, so our meetings involve laughter and some frivolity as well as serious consideration of matters affecting our community.

It is invidious to single out individuals, but I must mention our Secretary, Ro Emsley, who will also be retiring at the AGM. Ro has been an invaluable support. Typical of her dedication, she has found a worthy successor and trained her for the job!

I am delighted to announce that the Committee have decided to nominate Paddy Doyle, our Vice Chairman, as my successor. Quite apart from his high profile activities with Songs of Widcombe and Bath, Paddy is responsible for our web site. Earlier this year, I was approached by Radio Somerset to speak on a Saturday morning programme involving the A-Z of Somerset place names. Widcombe had been chosen to represent the W's, due to our outstanding web site! I am confident that the Association's affairs will be in safe hands.

## Secretary's Report Rosemary Emsley

After five years as secretary, I shall be handing over at the end of this month to Liz Littlewood, a friend and WA member. I am very grateful that she has agreed to take the job on as continuity can be assured. We will send out an email to this effect in April and the website will be updated with her details after election at the AGM, together with any other committee changes. She will continue to answer/forward to the correct committee member your queries at the new email address for all general WA enquiries:

**Secretary@widcombeassociation.org.uk**

When emails are returned with ‘unable to deliver to this address’ she will phone you to say there is a problem and ask if you have changed your email address. If you remember to let us know any changes or if you leave the area and no longer want to receive emails, we will be happy to oblige. Thanks to those who have done so.

*See my note elsewhere about volunteers to the Committee!*

## Treasurer's Report

*Jeremy Boss*

**T**he Association's finances remain sound. We made a small surplus of income over expenditure in the year to December 2010 of £600 (last year £1,536). We have £6,884 (last year £6,981) of net assets including £320 (last year £911) in a fund reserved for the Abbey Cemetery.

### **How we spend our money**

We have a total income, including from subscriptions and events, of £18,789. This enables us to fund our activities and events and make donations to relevant local causes.

Donations in 2010 were made to Natural Theatre Co for Widcombe Rising and their mezzanine appeal (£2,993), Beechen Cliff School – music appeal (£600) and Widcombe Junior School - Wrobotiers (£200).

The remainder of funds were used to run our events and clubs (£9,664), administration costs (£1918), our share of the horse trough conservation costs (£700), purchases to support our activities (£2,547). There was also work undertaken on the trees at the Abbey Cemetery (£625).

A summary of the independently reviewed accounts is included below. Full accounts, are available at the AGM and subsequently on our website.

### **Membership Renewal**

Membership is due for the 2011 year from 1 January 2011 so you should have now paid. Thank you to all who have done so. This can be via direct debit, or by cash or cheque to the membership secretary. Please, if you have a standing order, make sure that it is for the right amount of £6 (or £15 for business members) and if you pay by direct debit you must cancel any pre-existing standing orders with your bank (we can not do this for you). We have a small backlog of some 20 BACS payments which we hope to process in the next few weeks so please bear with us.

WA membership offers great value for money. You can get discounts at local businesses that will not only quickly repay your subscription but also support local firms and our events and help keep Widcombe vibrant.

### **Summary Accounts**

Income	£	Expenditure	£
Membership fees	3,072	Administration expenses	4,666
Grants	1,146	Donations	3,794
Events takings	14,579	Events and publications costs	10,329
- Garden Club £1,414			
- Tickets, sponsors, sales and donations £13,165			
Shortfall (excess) of income over expenses	(8)		
- Abbey Cemetery Group £592			
- Widcombe Association (£600)			
	18,789		18,789

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## Events

*Sarah Lewis*

**R**emember that Widcombe Association members get priority booking for the Events, from the time you receive your programmes until 17th April, so do not miss out on the popular events! We are testing using the Bath Festival's Box Office for the Opera and the Concert this year, so half the tickets for these will be on sale through them - but you can book now through WA box office!

We hope you will enjoy the summer programme of events. We are so pleased that Crowe Hall is again to be the setting for another Bath Opera production this June, by kind permission of the Lees family. Following our picnics, we will be entertained by Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*.

Prior Park Buildings have invited us to be their guests at a Perambulation to be held in front of their terrace, where we can wander along beside the stream and admire their beautiful and varied front gardens while enjoying wine, music, and the company of other WA members - this in aid of the maintenance fund for the stream.

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I am particularly excited about the opening on 25 June of the new footpath that will provide a lovely round trip walk up to the Landscape Garden and back avoiding the main road. And excited too that Alistair Durie's extensive knowledge of local history and St Thomas' has been taken in hand by Sian Lewis and Tony Coverdale and fashioned into a booklet that will be launched on 1 July.

Our concert this year features a Handful of Singers in the beautiful church of the Widcombe Baptists - a wonderful setting for an outstanding choir, joined on this occasion by a choir from Widcombe CofE Junior School.

There are more gardens, walks, teas and of course The Widcombe Art Trail - more artists and venues, and don't miss Widcombe's world class architectural model maker, Timothy Richards, who will be displaying some exciting new projects he is involved with, as well as items for sale.

## Can you Volunteer?

The programme could not run without volunteers, and we would particularly like to hear from you if you can help us in any way. This might many different forms - from baking a cake from time to time, stewarding an opera, tending a bar, lugging chairs - we would be most grateful if you could contact Ro Emsley on 337865 or [roemsley@hotmail.com](mailto:roemsley@hotmail.com) and let her know what type of help you might be able to offer.

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### **Abbey Cemetery – A New Path**

*David Waterstone & Andrew Gordon-Duff*



Arrangements are well advanced for the dedication of a permissive path from the main entrance of the Cemetery up to the Mortuary chapel and then along the track beside the Roman Catholic Cemetery and out into Blind Lane. In the old days this track is believed to have been used by hearses.

Volunteers from The Widcombe Association and the Cotswold Wardens are hard at work on the track and surrounding woodland area (see picture), which enjoys an elevated position with magnificent views over the city. There are remains of a small building which it is understood was once used by a watchman/superintendent/gardener. At the same time efforts are being made to restore this beautiful piece of ground and also to create a vantage point for visitors to rest and take in the beautiful scenery.

The process has been quite complicated. First of all the Abbey had to arrange for a section of the boundary wall with the Roman Catholic Burial Ground to be rebuilt and the Cotswold Wardens then started clearing the undergrowth and installed a kissing gate into Blind Lane. Planning consent had to be obtained to remove trees/branches of trees overhanging the path before the tree surgeons were able to move in. They were then on site for 3 ½ days. All the while, the clearing of the site of undergrowth – some huge laurels, and rubbish generally, has continued. It was a requirement that the tree work should be done outside the bird nesting season.

The path and whole area are going to be a very valuable facility for our community and will enable visitors walking to Prior Park Gardens or using the Popes Walk to do most of it over “country paths” rather than up Prior Park Road.

Our grateful thanks are due to Bath Abbey for their close cooperation and generous contributions to the funding of the initiative, to the Cotswold Wardens for providing work parties and to many of our own members.

Although the work continues, the opening date for the path with appropriate celebrations has been fixed for Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> June. This will also see the launch of a leaflet describing the walk from the Railway station via the Abbey Cemetery to the Landscape Garden and back by way of the lower gate. This will be downloadable from the WA website, and with a link from the NT website

### **New History of St Thomas à Becket**

*Sian Lewis*



Members of the congregation of St Thomas à Becket Church in Church Street, Widcombe have taken up the challenge of writing a new history of the church. The last published church history booklet dates from the 1930s and, although a much-improved pamphlet is available to visitors courtesy of Phil Bendall and the Widcombe and Lyncombe Local History Society, it was felt that the subject warranted a more comprehensive and detailed survey as well. Sian Lewis and Tony Coverdale have been working closely with Alistair Durie and they plan to bring together all the most recent research findings relating to this ancient site into one publication. The booklet will be launched at a Summer Drinks Evening on **Friday 1<sup>st</sup> July** at St Thomas (see What's On for details) and all proceeds from the sale of the booklet will go to church funds.

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## The Rossiter Road Consultation - The Widcombe Association's Response to B&NES

Subject to the comments and recommendations below, the Widcombe Association strongly supports the proposed scheme.

Rossiter Road and Widcombe Parade are within the Bath World Heritage Site (WHS), the Bath Conservation Area and on the edge of the study area for the Public Realm and Movement Strategy for the Bath City Centre so the Association considers that:

- The design quality of all parts of the scheme should be consistent with the World Heritage Site Management Plan 2010-2016
  - The standards of urban design quality, implied by policies on conservation areas within the Local Plan, should be applied to the scheme
- The Public Realm and Movement Strategy should be central to the design philosophy for the scheme.



Regarding traffic engineering issues, we recommend, if possible:

- Provision of a right turn from Rossiter Road into Lyncombe Hill
  - A trial of temporary traffic signals (or none) at the White Hart junction.
- Reconsideration of the short stretch of cycle lane within the carriageway on the north side of Rossiter Road.

Regeneration of Widcombe Parade has always been our key objective for this scheme so we urge the Council to:

- Prepare an urban design strategy for Widcombe Parade, to be carried out in parallel with the detailed engineering design.
  - Landscape the area to the west of the Parade and include tree planting (to which the Association is willing to contribute)
  - To design the area in front of the White Hart as a public space, not just a traffic junction
  - Consider a more sympathetic approach to street lighting
- Minimise the extent of street signing and road marking  
There is an opportunity for the Council to invest in the stimulation of this important local centre.

We are keen to ensure the design of the scheme, overall, is to the highest standards and are anxious to engage with the Council to help achieve this. The WHS Management Plan includes an objective "to ensure that all traffic, transport and pedestrian management schemes enhance the value of the Site". In our view, the scheme does not meet this objective. We therefore ask that:

- An urban design input be included as part of the final detailing of the scheme
- The need to fell mature trees is carefully re-considered and if necessary compromise to some degree the engineering standards that have been applied.

An end date for the public consultation needs to be set and a firm project plan produced, incorporating provision for Widcombe Rising in June 2012.

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## Traffic and Highways

Julian Williams



*Whilst Rossiter Road has been our main focus over past months, other issues have received our attention too. Here are some of them.*



**Church Street – enforcement of ‘Access Only’ restriction, and deterrence of HGV traffic.** After years of frustration and damage to cars and buildings, householders in Church Street formed themselves into an Association in Sept 2010 affiliated within the Widcombe Association. They have succeeded in putting in place many measures since that date, including more signage and monitoring of non-authorised use of the road. Their worst problem, though, appears to be satnav-guided HGVs (often from Eastern Europe) which attempt to transit the narrow road, get stuck, and then have to be helped to reverse out. Not an easy task and understandably one that causes much anguish. The police and the council officers are assisting the CSA in tackling these problems.

**Traffic Calming in Greenway Lane.** A scheme has been approved to impose a 20mph speed limit in Greenway Lane and to place speed tables in strategic spots along the road to encourage respect of this lower limit. At the time of going to press, we understand that the necessary roadworks are programmed to start in mid April. If and when the desired ‘no right turn’ from Wellsway to Greenway Lane will ever be put in place, though, remains uncertain – bogged down in the Council’s planning morass, apparently.

**20 mph speed limit on Lyncombe Hill and adjoining roads.** A consultation exercise took place in autumn 2010. This has led to officers preparing a scheme in readiness for public consultation within the coming few weeks. As so often, though, details and timescales are hard to obtain. **Speed monitoring on Widcombe Hill** is an issue which arises regularly. It seems to many residents, at various points along the Hill, that cars often exceed the 30 mph limit – especially those going uphill from the very bottom, and those going downhill in the middle stretch. Unfortunately the speed monitoring which has been carried out by the Council at least three times in the last few years has not produced evidence of this. If the ‘average’ speed detected, over 24 hours, is less than 33 mph the Council does not consider any action is needed – even though clearly some cars will have been driven at much higher speeds than that. This is a thorny problem on which the Council will not be persuaded to shift their stance – and in the meantime nothing is done and frustrations grow stronger.

**Relocation of the Pedestrian Crossing on Wells Road and Pedestrian Crossing on Prior Park Road abreast Widcombe Rise and Forefield Rise.** The Council has accepted that safety risks exist at these locations and so have added them to their ‘Traffic and Safety Task Register’. However neither item is funded in the capital works programme. They will be considered for a place in next year’s programme, but only in competition with other schemes that will be put forward. We will urge our Councillors to continue to press for these important road safety measures to be funded and then put in place.



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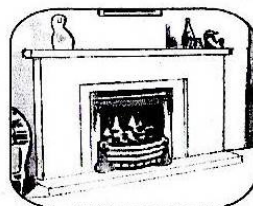
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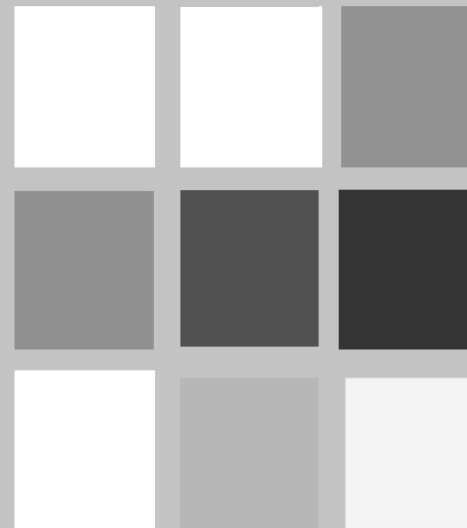
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## Planning

*Andrew Gordon-Duff*



### Bath and NE Somerset Core Strategy

On 16<sup>th</sup> December 2010 BANES issued their revised Draft Core Strategy which invited comments by 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2011. This replaced an earlier 2009 Core Strategy which promoted, amongst other things, 8000 new homes in the city, 2000 of which would form a neighbourhood extension at Newton St Loe or South Stoke.

The plan seeks to guide where development is to be permitted, how much we should have, what land should be protected and how places should change up to the year 2026.

The revised strategy is a much more realistic policy with the main aspects being as follows:

**Housing** The development of 6,000 new homes of which 3,500 will be on brown field sites in the central and western corridor and the remaining 2,500 from Bath's neighbourhoods (such as Widcombe) where surplus Ministry of Defence land will play a major role. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) suggests that Foxhill could provide about 500 houses together with one hectare being used for offices.

## Membership

*Mayveen Blackwell*

Currently, 369 households have paid their subscriptions for 2011. That indicates that we have 633 members as I write but we may yet receive subscriptions from the 31 stragglers before the Newsletters are distributed. The numbers are up from last year probably because of clearer reminders that 1st January is the payment date. Newsletters will be sent only to the paid-up households. As our numbers exceed 300, we are given three votes at the Federation of Bath Residents' Associations and only one other area in Bath can use that privilege.

Our new system of sending card labels when payments are received is much better than the previous method where labels were sent with newsletters. Those with Direct Debits or correct Standing Orders are deemed to have paid immediately and

**Economic Development** An increase in jobs from 61,700 to 67,000 in 2026 equating to 5,300 more jobs supported by an uplift in office accommodation of some 70,000 sq m.

**Shopping** The report makes no forecast on the amount of additional retail space required over this period other than to say that the primary shopping area should successfully absorb Southgate into the trading patterns of the city. Perhaps more importantly from Widcombe's perspective the policy is "to protect and where possible enhance the vitality of district and local centres".

**Transportation etc** There is a commitment "to support the development strategy for Bath with the implementation of necessary transport and other infrastructure to improve movement accessibility to employment and community facilities in Bath".

The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment or SHLAA was published at the same time in support of the Core Strategy. This lists only two sites in our area which are the Social Club on the corner with Widcombe Hill and the former Mill-house Audi garage showroom which are then discounted owing to their small size. Although in Lyncombe, it is worth mentioning that the Lower Field at Beechen Cliff School is included and is the subject of a campaign by Greenway! to get it removed.

others receive new labels as payments come in.

There was a short delay this year owing to my delayed trip to Austria so my apologies – it was the snow, honest!

Traders who offer discounts are asked to be lenient with out of date cards only until 14<sup>th</sup> January.

Thank you to all prompt payers who make our work much easier. Ann Ashworth has been helping to bring the system up to scratch and will take over after the AGM.

## FRIENDS OF THE HOLBURNE MUSEUM PLANT SALE

**Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> May 11am- 2pm**  
**in the grounds of the Holburne Museum,**  
**Great Pulteney Street, Bath**  
**10 nurseries ♦ Friends' plant stall**  
**gardening books ♦ refreshments**

**Federation of Bath Residents' Associations**  
*Mayveen Blackwell*



Over the last years The Federation of Bath Residents' Associations (Fobra) has become more efficient, effective, interactive and relevant than previously as a programme of new

initiatives has unrolled; there are student representatives, affiliates, sub-committees, observers at meetings, a more informative website and a will to involve new representatives from previously absent parts of the city. Voting in the forum is now related to number of households in each Association so Widcombe has considerable influence. Usually two Widcombe committee members attend each bimonthly meeting.

Predictably, issues covered have ranged over traffic and transport, the Rugby Club and possible developments on the Rec, the Cleanliness Task and Finish Group, winter weather proposals, pick-up and set-down arrangements at the station, the Big Society, sustainable levels of student recruitment, an exceptional presentation on the night-time economy with its problems - and inevitably Planning which itself is related to the World Heritage Site (WHS). An earlier survey of representatives' opinions threw up the most important of their concerns which were The Character and Culture of Bath, Spending Cuts, Street Environment and Maintenance, plus Transport, Traffic and Pollution.

We were invited to a special Public Realm and Movement Programme exhibition by the Council whose initiatives should be coming into fruition by May of this year. In turn, we invited prominent Councillors, Officers and other important leaders from services such as the police to a reception. That gave each of us an opportunity to lobby and speak for our members; it was a valuable event to be repeated.

Work is progressing on the Localism Bill which may give more powers to organisations such as FoBRA and WA but the implications are not clear at the moment. Another important document under survey is the Draft Core Strategy which unfortunately makes little reference to the WHS. It does however refer to the Rossiter Road scheme as regenerating a local shopping area so our voice has been heard.

**C**over Photograph in this edition is by WA member Valerie Cooper. It shows artist Peter Brown painting a scene that we hope will change radically in the near future.

Peter opens a new exhibition "Bath Between the Snows" at the Victoria Art Gallery on 9th April. The exhibition runs until 2nd June.

Photographs for consideration for the Newsletter are gratefully accepted in jpeg form via email to

**[Newsletter@widcombeassociation.org.uk](mailto:Newsletter@widcombeassociation.org.uk)**



**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

**W**e always need new volunteers both for the committee and other jobs. At present we need somebody to look after our archive and help put on occasional exhibitions. This person would not need to be a full committee member but have a little time to familiarise themselves with the material we have collected over the years and perhaps organise it better. Sometimes, we mount small exhibitions to coincide with particular events and help with these would be appreciated.

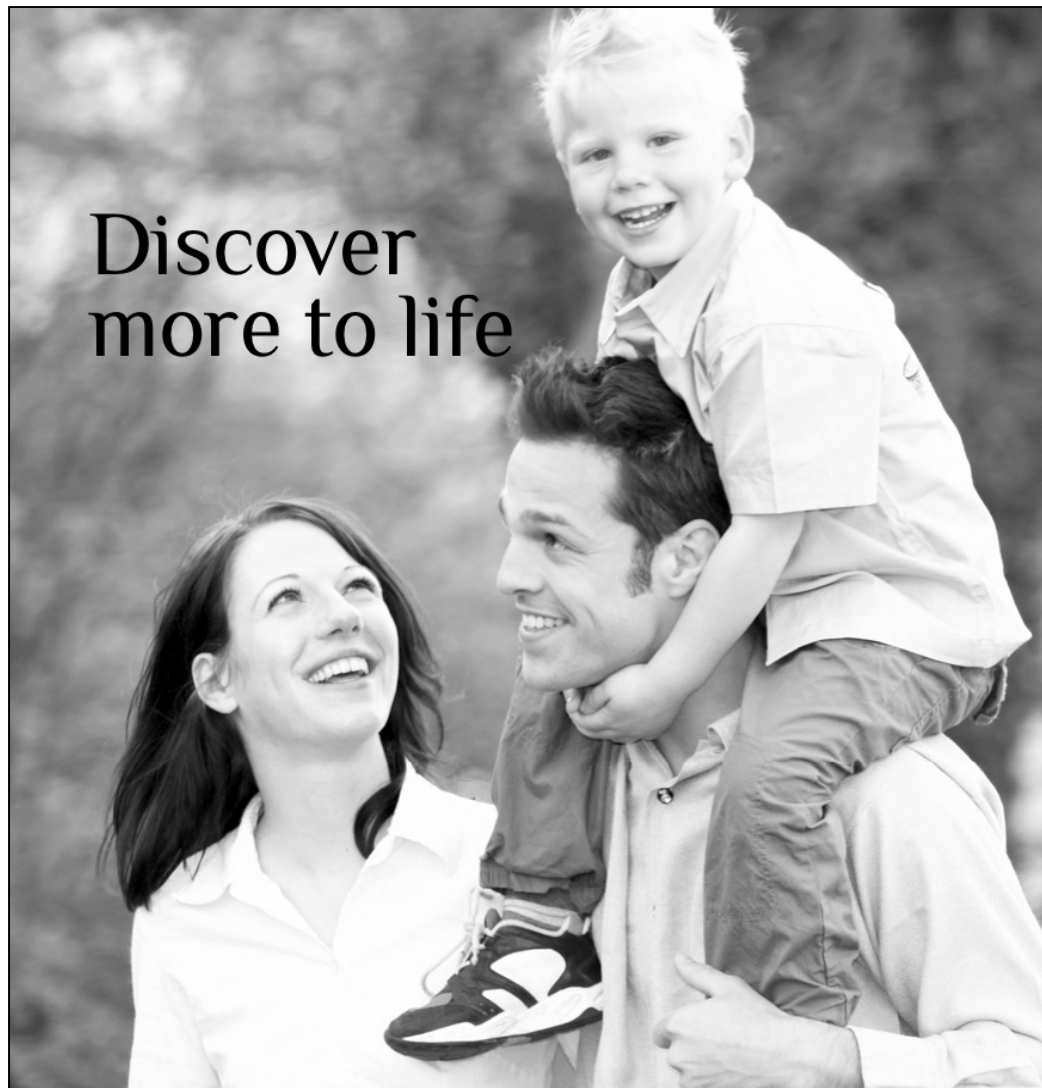
We are also looking for a volunteer who would take a particular interest in traffic and highways issues in Widcombe - essentially road safety, traffic speed, parking, road works, and all schemes and proposals put forward by the Council and others, in this arena. We're hoping that an enthusiast will come forward (perhaps one of the Community Speed Watch volunteers?) who can monitor these important local matters, and as a focus for dealing with key B&NES officers, with whom we have built up a good relationship in recent years. A handover would be provided, of course.

Prospective committee members are always needed to take over as the present members come to the end of their terms of office. It is unusual to find a willing friend. If you are at all interested, have a look at the website

**[www.widcombeassociation.org.uk](http://www.widcombeassociation.org.uk)**

to see what committee members do, contact the secretary and come along to observe a meeting. We are also compiling a new list of general volunteers to help at events - see the Events Report.

# Discover more to life



Welcome to Widcombe Baptist Church, where we strive to serve the community with activities for all ages. For information on youth, toddlers, the elderly, small group Bible studies, Exploring Christianity workshops, students, Sunday services and much more, visit [www.widcombebaptistchurch.org](http://www.widcombebaptistchurch.org), or call the church office on 01225 316 358, we'd love to hear from you.

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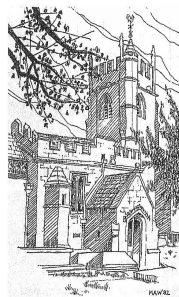
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*Fr. Yves 01225-318338*

*Mother Sarah 01225-330651*

*For further information, please see our website.  
[www.bath-orthodox.org.uk](http://www.bath-orthodox.org.uk)*

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*For contact and other information -  
[www.widcombebenefice.org.uk](http://www.widcombebenefice.org.uk)*

**THE COTSWOLD VOLUNTARY WARDENS ARE PLEASED TO  
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ABBEY CEMETERY**

## **Have you ever thought of becoming a Cotswold Warden?**

The Wardens are the executive arm of the Cotswold Conservation Board which is responsible for the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Activities range from **patrolling rights of way, leading guided walks, dry stone walling, hedge laying, tree planting and maintaining the traditional features of the Cotswold countryside.**

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## PACT Partners & Communities Together

The February PACT meeting was modestly attended, suggesting perhaps that by and large we are content with the service rendered to us by our public servants. The

horrific nature of the problem with HGVs in Church St was well-illustrated with some recently-taken photos. The issue of through traffic provided some controversy when one attendee said he had been driving along Church St for over 30 years and was determined to continue to do so. PC Malcolm Webley said that his involvement has been the occasional stopping of cars and questioning of drivers. A £30 fixed penalty is available for drivers not 'accessing' the street, but has not so far been used.

The following priorities for future action were agreed at the meeting:

1. Graffiti in Widcombe.
2. Access only issue in Church St and problems with HGVs.
3. Speeding in Prior Park Rd.

The next PACT meeting is scheduled for 7.30 pm on **Tuesday 14th June 2011** at **Hayesfield Upper School**, Upper Old-field Park. Hayesfield was chosen at Councillor Ian Gilchrist's behest to try to ensure that the western part of the Widcombe Ward did not feel isolated.



### NUTS FOR ALL! Smallcombe Community Nuttery

In a few years' time, you should be able to harvest nuts (almonds, sweet chestnuts, cobnuts and walnuts) within walking distance of home, as a result of Transition Bath's and the National Trust's project in Smallcombe Vale. Transition Bath's food group encourages local food production, distribution and

retailing as a more sustainable alternative to imported food.

We are very pleased that the National Trust have provided the site by Farm Lane (near the new kissing gate). On a wet and windy Sunday, 13th February, over 40 volunteers turned up to plant 37 nut trees. Afterwards, everyone gathered around the fire to listen to music by the Widcombe Wobblers and to eat baked potatoes and roast chestnuts. A big 'thank you' to those of you who helped and particularly to those who sponsored trees.

Our next step will be to start planting fruit bushes along the fence. These, too, will be for you to harvest. Prior Park Garden Centre are generously offering a 25% discount on blackcurrant and gooseberry bushes donated to the project. If you'd like to help, bring one (or more!) along to the nuttery on Saturday, 9th April, 3-4pm.

We are planning a community picnic on **Friday, 17th June**, to which you are all invited. It will start at 6pm, so families can attend, and last until dusk.

### Naturals' Mezzanine Update

Ralph Oswick



First of all, we can no longer use the word mezzanine as what we now have is a proper room created out of thin air, with a proper staircase and by the time you read this a proper fully fitted sprung dance floor. None of your half-hearted balcony thingies here!

The Naturals staff have struggled on bravely through the hammering, drilling and dust so thick it has on occasions set the fire alarm off. My dears, I've got through bottles of skin cleanser (and cough linctus) as I lay gasping on my sofa at the end of a hard day's breathing!

Funding is in place, thanks to the generosity of

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## Widcombe Social Club



A number of Widcombe Association members are also members of Widcombe Social Club. The club provides a great facility for the area in the

form of recreational activities, entertainment and more recently the redecorated Lakeside Suite which is available for meetings and parties. The club is now licensed to welcome non-members (no need to be signed in), though members enjoy reduced prices at the bar and other benefits. Non-members can also hire the various rooms for private functions.

There is a whole programme of events throughout **Bath Comedy Festival** organised by Nick Steel, the new festival director.

There are also a number of weekday off-street parking spaces available on a monthly or yearly basis. The yearly rates have just been reduced to make them cheaper than those at the railway station.

**www.widcombesocialclub.co.uk**



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## Widcombe & Lyncombe Local History Society Programme Apr—October

**Wednesday 20 April 2011** 7.30 pm Widcombe Baptist Church Lower Hall  
**A Coronation not a Wedding in 1911** Celebrations in Widcombe and Bath for the Coronation of George V, and other events 100 years ago. *An illustrated talk by Margaret Burrows*

**Sunday 15 May** Meet at Claverton Church at 2.30 pm  
**A Walk around Claverton Village**  
Ralph Allen owned the old Claverton Manor and drove down his carriage way every week from the Manor or Prior Park. He is buried here. If you need a lift, ring 480749

**Thursday 16 June** 4 pm Widcombe Baptist Church Lower Hall  
**Oral History in Widcombe**  
Enjoy tea and cake and hear memories of the destruction of much of the Claverton Street area in the 1960s and 1970s, and the building of Rossiter Road and the Deep Lock. *Presented by Helen Peter.*

**Thursday 7 July** 7.30 pm The Bear Inn, Bear Flat  
**The Beginnings of Alexandra Park in 1902 and its later history.** *A talk by Margaret Burrows*

**Thursday 15 September** 7.30 pm Widcombe Baptist Church Lower Hall  
**Widcombe Characters**  
Some of the Widcombe locals who did good and others well known for the wrong reasons  
*A talk by Doreen Collyer*

**Thursday 13 October** 7.30 pm Widcombe Baptist Church Lower Hall  
**The Story of Crowe Hall**  
The house and its contents were recently sold at auction, including a Roman vase sold for £445,000.  
*An illustrated talk by Fay Briddon*

Further information: **Margaret Burrows 480749, Fay Briddon 310127, Doreen Collyer 311723**

individuals, organisations, Widcombe Association, B&NES and grant-giving bodies. Really, it has been quite hard to explain the project in a nutshell (well, in an exciting nutshell anyway) and there's also the hurdle of the preconception that B&NES is an affluent area. As our Creative Learning Strategy states research shows that there are pockets of cultural and economic deprivation in the area which are in the worst 10% in the country.

When I say funding is in place, there is the little matter of the £20k that Naturals have lent from their reserves which has to be paid back over the next couple of years. (They also donated a further £20k which we don't have to pay back! This was money left over from our Millennium Dome residency which was astutely invested. So the Dome did some good after all!)

We hope to sign the builders off on May 4<sup>th</sup>. There will still be some decorating to do and some velvet curtains to sew (I might organise a volunteer day) but there it will be at last!

As to users, our Natural Youth Theatre has grown to over thirty strong if proof were needed that the facility will be well used!

Thanks everyone for your fantastic support

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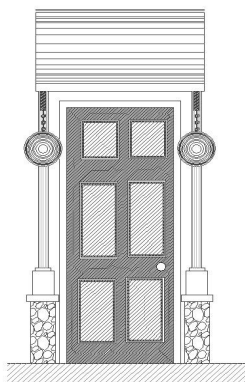
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