

The Widcombe Association's Autumn Meeting

will be held on

Thursday, 25th October 7:30 pm
at Widcombe C of E Junior School

Following the formal meeting there will be a talk by

Stephen Baddeley, Director of Sport at the University of Bath

on the University of Bath's contribution to the 2012 Olympic Games, why Team GB is now so successful and what it takes to be an elite athlete

This is also a Social Occasion - wine & nibbles provided!

Guest tickets £3.50 (refunded if you join the WA on the night)

The WA Committee

Paddy Doyle 311809
 Chairman, Newsletter, Website

Liz Littlewood 333044
 Secretary, FoBRA Liaison

Jeremy Boss 484794
 Treasurer

Andrew Gordon-Duff 480682
 Vice Chairman, Chairman 'Entry to Widcombe', Planning

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Keith Palmer 284598
 FoBRA Liaison

Helen Peter 334936
 Streetscape, Entry to Widcombe

Chris Rogers 448171
 Chairman Events Sub-committee

Richard Wales 422677
 Chairman, Rossiter Rd Sub-committee

Email your Committee:
Secretary@widcombeassociation.org.uk

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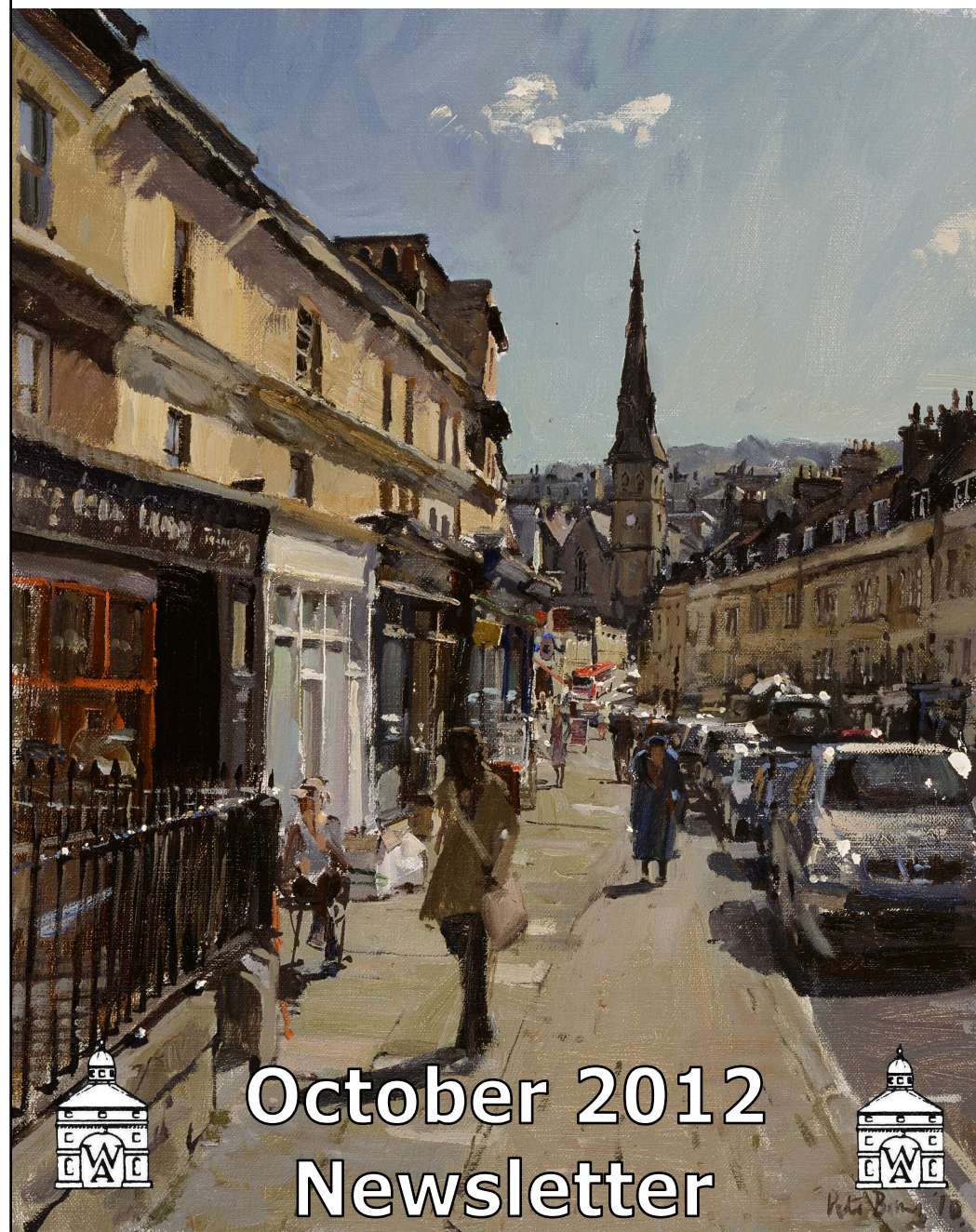
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 (not prescriptions/medicines)

Vibe Fitness - 10%

The Widcombe Association

www.widcombeassociation.org.uk



October 2012
Newsletter



Published by the Widcombe Association.

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

Vice Chairman: Andrew Gordon-Duff, Blantyre House, Widcombe Hill, Bath BA2 6AE

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Chairman's Column

Paddy Doyle

It would be tempting on this occasion, with the cheers of enthusiastic Widcombe citizens still ringing in our ears following the announcement at Widcombe Rising that the Council cabinet had approved the Rossiter Rd scheme, to use a large strap headline, echoing the nation's favourite newspaper, that 'it's the WA wot won it!' And (apart from the syntax) this would not be very far from wrong. The Association has fought a long battle under many chairmen to achieve this result. On this occasion the right combination of excellent leadership, peerless professional knowledge and ability among the members of our Rossiter Rd sub-committee, support from our local councillors, and Cabinet members who were prepared to listen and make brave decisions, has led to the happy position in which we now find ourselves. None of this excellent leadership, I might say, came from me: whilst this has been the culmination of the efforts of many over the years, I must mention that our previous chairman Richard Wales has been a steady hand on the Rossiter Rd tiller now for almost 5 years. If I might mix this metaphor slightly, he will not now be resting on his oars - in fact this is a crucial time for the Rossiter Rd Steering Group, chaired by Councillor Ian Gilchrist and comprising Richard and Mike Wrigley from the Association, Councillors Symonds and Bellotti with Council officers in attendance, to tweak the plan as required and more importantly oversee the design of the urban landscape. All Widcombe residents should by now have received our 'Vision for Widcombe' document, and all are encouraged to make their views known on how our regenerated Village Street should look. There will undoubtedly be some squalls ahead before the first digger arrives in Widcombe Parade, and that will be the occasion when we can properly celebrate more than 30 years of struggle.

Once we have achieved the pleasant village street that so many of us desire, we must ensure that this attractive destination is easily reached by city-centre dwellers and visitors to Bath alike. As through traffic on the A36 will no longer flow along our village street, we must ensure that pedestrians are attracted into Widcombe from the city centre. This means we must tackle the currently unappetising approaches into Widcombe, including the underpass, the Halfpenny Bridge and the riverside path. Each has its own particular negative features. To address these problems we

have already set up an 'Entry to Widcombe' sub-committee under Andrew Gordon-Duff. Helen Peter writes more about this and the problems that must be tackled on P.10.

By the time you read this, Widcombe Social Club will have closed its doors and will be on the move to its temporary home in Twerton. It is probably fair to say that the old club building was unloved and unlovely and that few will mourn its passing. During the consultation held earlier this year, the WA made several comments to the developers about the design of the proposed new building. Some were attended to, others not. We have therefore made further comments to the planners which are covered in the Planning Report on P.6. The WA supports the club's ambitions and we hope that solutions can be found that the developers and Widcombe residents alike can be happy with, providing a revived Social Club that complements the Village Street and makes an attractive venue for those who might not otherwise venture south of the river. The fact that the same developers are already producing an attractively-finished building next door to the Club site gives us reason to hope.

Your committee recently undertook a little navel-gazing to try to better understand the Association's role in Widcombe - apart from our over-riding mission to 'protect and enhance'. We particularly looked at our image (not family-friendly, perhaps?) whether we exist for all residents (we do) and how we relate to other groups, including residents' associations, within our area of interest. We identified at least 17 other organisations: some dormant, some active, some single-issue, some merely social. We wondered if there was some way that resources could be pooled and information shared for mutual benefit. As a result of our discussion, we established a small group: Chris Rogers, Helen Peter, Keith Palmer and Jeremy Boss, who would talk to local groups and decide what measures we could take. If you would like to enter into the debate on this subject, contact any one of the group (details on rear cover).

And finally...partly as a result of our attempting to see ourselves as others do, we now have a WA Facebook page. It is very much in its early stages, but if you log on to it and 'like' it, then when we put information on it, you'll be alerted via email. In time perhaps we should have a 'Widcombe portal' where you can find all things Widcombe. Meanwhile, however, you can:



Secretary's Report**Liz Littlewood**

Widcombe.

You will see by the many and varied reports in this newsletter that your Committee continues to be actively involved with a large number of issues that have an important bearing on the life of

Keith Palmer has been co-opted onto the Committee and will be standing for election at the Autumn Meeting. His inclusion will bring the Committee up to full strength for the first time in a long while, and we look forward to his involvement. As a resident of St Mark's Road, he is also able to help forge links between the St. Mark's group and the Widcombe Association. Keith will be taking over from Paddy as one of our two FoBRA representatives.

The imminent closure of the Widcombe Social Club has meant that we have had to find an alternative venue for our meetings. The Ring o' Bells has kindly agreed to allow us to use their upstairs room and we are able to have a convivial post-meeting drink in pleasant surroundings once business is concluded.

I am no longer sending out e-mails about Events. You will have seen that these now come in a much more sophisticated form from the Events team! Should you not be getting this information and would like to, please let us know, and we will add you to the list.

I will, however, continue to send out other information via e-mail and am currently in the process of ensuring that my e-mail address list is up to date. If you change your e-mail address, or acquire one and would like to be included, please do let me know.

As always, we need volunteers to help in a wide range of ways. These can be helping to plan events, stewarding, manning our bookstall at events, organising publicity and so on. We also need someone who would be interested in looking after our archive. This would involve familiarising themselves with the material and organising the material so that we can make better use of it in future. If you feel you would like to help in any way, please contact a committee member. As ever, many thanks are due to the current team of volunteers for their on-going work.

Treasurer's Report**Jeremy Boss**

The Association continues to remain in good financial health with growing membership and a successful summer events programme. At the end of August 2011 we had just over £18,000 in our bank including £111 earmarked for the Abbey Cemetery and advances for Energy Efficient Widcombe of £6,500.

Our funds have been bolstered by a successful Warmer Widcombe initiative and the summer events programme. This has allowed us to support local causes including the Bath Comedy Festival, Alexander Park Forum, the Mummies Unconvention, Church Street bollards, Widcombe PCC (St Matthews) and of course Widcombe Rising.

We have also received grant support from the Department of Energy & Climate Change to support the Warmer Widcombe Initiative which was completed back in March.

Our funds are in good shape to support the objectives of the Association going forward including for promoting the regeneration of Widcombe Parade,

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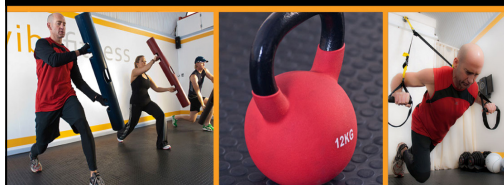
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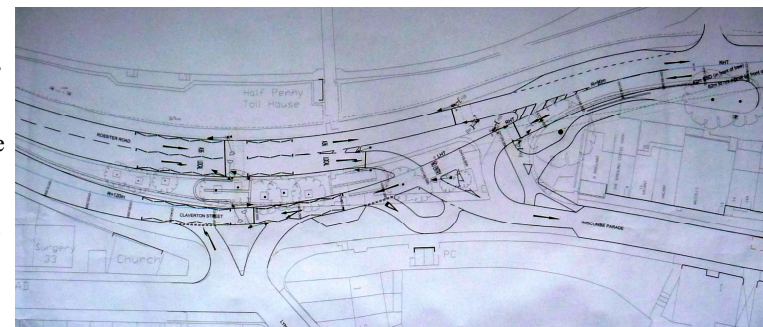
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Rossiter Road and the Vision for Widcombe

Richard Wales

Paddy Doyle, in his Chairman's column, refers to the Council Cabinet decision of 13th June to go ahead with the Rossiter Road scheme. The next stage is to develop a detailed plan and the Council have engaged Place Studio to work on the urban and landscape design elements. All the comments made in responses to the "A Vision for Widcombe" questionnaire are being provided to the consultants and these, together with the Vision document itself, will provide invaluable guidance in their work.



(Ed Note: The plan above is a little small, but should give an idea of the proposed road layout. The plan would be better viewed on the Association's website at www.widcombeassociation.org.uk/rossiter.html)

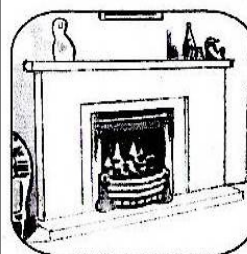
At the time of writing, we had received 153 responses to the Vision. Of these, 141 answered "Yes" (in principle) with 90 adding additional comments. Many made kind remarks about the work of the Subcommittee and I take this opportunity to say, "thank you!" Only three respondents gave an outright No and two of these did so on the grounds that they did not feel the Vision is achievable. The remaining 9 either sought further information or did not express a clear opinion either way.

We are most anxious to maximise the number of responses as the more who reply, the greater the weight that can be attached to your opinions; so, if you haven't done so, please complete the questionnaire as soon as possible and return it to me or, if you prefer, e-mail your response to widcombevision@gmail.com.

I'm sure that everyone would like to know when it actually will happen. The draft programme shows works on site commencing in the autumn of next year. In accordance with the Council's normal practice, work will be suspended over the Christmas period to avoid interference with shopping traffic. Completion is expected in Spring 2014.

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Planning

Andrew Gordon-Duff

Widcombe Social Club



A planning application was lodged at the end of August with the proposed development being made up of two sections; the western section (at the Widcombe Parade end) comprising a convenience local supermarket of 3500 sq ft and 3 floors of student residential accommodation above, with the eastern section (up Widcombe Hill) forming the Social Club's reallocated new building adjacent to St Matthew's Church. The main access to the student accommodation is from the Widcombe Hill side with a secondary one from Pulteney Road. The Convenience Store will be serviced from the lay-by forming part of the Canal Bridge building next door. The picture shows how the new building might look.

The new plans take into account two observations we made following the public consultation earlier this year: the roof-line has been altered to conform with that of the White Hart, and the very dark finish to the rear, facing the canal, has been replaced with brighter cladding. In our comment to the Planning Department on the recent application we have reiterated our support for the Club's aspirations, but expressed our continued misgivings about certain aspects of the scheme, particularly the height, dominance and fenestration of the north-western arm of the scheme (facing down Widcombe Parade). We have also mentioned the pressure on residents' parking that would result from the loss of parking presently available at the Club. Our full submission is available on the website and on the BANES website under the planning reference 12/03234/FUL.

Beechen Cliff School - Sports Lighting to Artificial Turf Pitches

Some residents in Greenway Lane have recently (17th Sep) received a letter from the School informing them that an amended application for lighting the artificial pitches was to be made. In the meantime the School was to make a limited number of tests to test playability on the pitches at reduced light levels. Our understanding is that the lights will then be tested in their modified form in the hours of darkness when leaves are no longer on the trees. We have asked to be informed when this will happen so that we can alert our members accordingly and let them have an opportunity to give their views.

Core Strategy

The Core Strategy is a key planning policy document for Bath and North East Somerset under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This sets out the strategic planning framework for the District guiding where development is to be permitted, how much we should have, what land should be protected and how places should change up to 2026. The Draft Core Strategy proposed 11,000 new homes and around 8700 new jobs and has been making its way through the consultation and examination stages. At the recent Examination in Public, the Inspector found that B&NES's assessment of the houses required does not accord with the NPPF with the result that the proceedings have been suspended whilst the Council carries out more work. Our view is that some additional land around Bath will ultimately be required for housing but we do not believe that Widcombe will be directly affected.

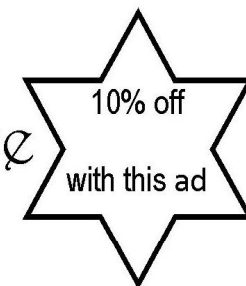
Homes in Multiple Occupation

In July BANES undertook a consultation on whether anyone wishing to use their home as a House of Multiple Occupation (HMO), irrespective of size, should require planning permission. Previously this only referred to houses with 6 or more unrelated people living there. We think planning permission should be required, not because we are anti-student, but because we deplore the loss of family accommodation and

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the damaging effect it can have on an area. We have confirmed our support for the measure which we are optimistic will come into force on 1st July 2013. BANES have started a further consultation this month regarding a possible requirement that these HMOs be licensed by BANES with a decision anticipated on this in March/April 2013. If anyone would like any further details on these topics they can be found on the BANES web site.

Entry into Widcombe

The 'Entry to Widcombe' Committee has been covered elsewhere in the newsletter by Helen Peter. This sub-committee has been set up to consider what improvements might be made to the various ways in and out of Widcombe, also with a view to increasing the profile of "the village". Initially we will focus on the underpass, the path along the river beside Thimble Mill and Halfpenny Bridge. We would welcome any comments or suggestions any of our members may care to make, please through the secretary whose email address is:
Secretary@widcombeassociation.org.uk.



Cover Picture from an original oil by
Peter Brown

Peter gave a very entertaining and informative talk at our 2011 Autumn meeting.

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Looking Back at The Bath Spark - Masters of Polemic

The **Bath Spark** Community Newspaper of 1978 was heady stuff. Few punches were pulled on its pages. Published by the Widcombe Action Group, it predates the Widcombe Association and its newsletter by some years. Its tone was hardly mild or deferential, suggesting as it did that *'our city streets have too long been the plaything of politicians, statisticians and highway engineers, who persistently erode the personal and emotional relationships between residents and their immediate environment.'* More rationally it says that *'the 'street' is the physical focus of community and should be treated in the way which it and its inhabitants deserve'*. Those of us who now welcome the regeneration of Widcombe Parade will all breathe 'Amen' to that. The writer goes on: *'conversely, those to whom the street belongs have a responsibility to it as well. We should not delegate responsibility for it without first making sure each one of us has done our best...'* In their final blast, however, the writer of this piece cannot resist the temptation to leave no reader unscathed: *'You don't need to tell me that Uncle Avon has the IQ of a dead plant and the effectiveness of a chocolate teapot, but it's not all his fault. We get what we deserve, whether it's education, architecture or juggernauts. Don't you think we deserve better?'*

We are also indebted to Jean Brushfield for the information that in the same issue there is a literary review of the volume "Underpants of the Waffen SS" by Max Gradient (!) This volume is a description of SS underwear from 1930 onwards, and was a book in a series published by Altmarm Press for the military model maker. Make of that what you will!

Thanks also to Nod Knowles for fishing this copy of the 'Spark' out from his loft or the back of his sofa or wherever he keeps these things.

If any reader knows any more about the Bath Spark or the identities of the writer(s) of this deathless prose, please let us know (contact details on rear cover).

WIDCOMBE ACTION GROUP

In April W.A.G. and its supporters lobbied the Avon Traffic and Planning Committee which came to the area on a fact finding mission. In May the group held a public meeting when the two Bath members of this all-powerful committee were encouraged to declare their position on the issue. Both councillors deployed their full range of side-stepping question-ducking manoeuvres. No one was surprised when three days later the Traffic and Planning Committee rejected the scheme put up by Bath, with the two Bath members abstaining. Now Bath has been given six months to come up with an acceptable alternative; but even if it does Bath taxpayers will have to pay.

Meanwhile W.A.G. fights on.



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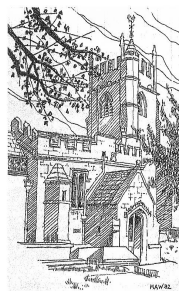
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No.3 July'78

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COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

DESTRUCTION OF WIDCOMBE!

WIDCOMBE ACTION GROUP FIGHT BACK

W.A.G. was formed with one clear aim in mind - to see that Widcombe is relieved of the menace that blights its shopping centre - the continuous traffic, particularly the heavy variety.

Ever since Bath abandoned the Tunnel scheme which would have taken through traffic under the historic part of the city to the north of the central shopping zone, Bath, and now Avon Planners have looked to the A36, the road that runs to the south and east of the river through Widcombe, as the cure-all for Bath's traffic problems.

Heavy vehicles from the A4 are now diverted along the A36. The number of container lorries travelling from Southampton to Bristol along this road has increased alarmingly in recent years. Also, local traffic moving from one side of the city to the other, which forms a large proportion of all vehicle journeys on Bath's roads, has been denied a direct route across the city centre. It now jostles with the juggernauts on the A36.



ROSSITER ROAD - UNDERUSED SPEEDWAY



All this has brought little joy and much pain to the beleaguered shopping centre at Widcombe. True, the area was given temporary relief when Rossiter Road - the two lane highway that carries eastbound traffic through Widcombe to the north of the shopping parade - was built a few years ago.

Now traffic volumes on the west-bound road have increased substantially, and a new surface has been laid on Widcombe Parade with the result that the traffic is now continuous in two lanes at rush hours and moving at startling speeds. With vehicles moving out of on street parking places just for good measure, Widcombe must surely be regarded

as Bath's foremost viewing ground for close encounters of the potentially fatal kind.

Bath City Planners, to their credit, agree that the environmental impact of the heavy traffic will kill off the shopping area, and that this would undoubtedly represent an immeasurable loss to the local community. The planners have therefore suggested a scheme whereby Rossiter Road would become a two way route. Widcombe Parade would be used for local traffic requiring access to the shopping street only. Avon, however, deny the viability of this plan, and consider Rossiter Road incapable of carrying two way flows.

CONTINUE OVER...

INSIDE * **COMMUNITY ACTION** * **FESTIVALS**
* **WHAT'S ON** * **INFORMATION** * **MUSIC SCENE**

Entry to Widcombe

Helen Peter



the canal (from Thimble Mill on), the Halfpenny Bridge, the underpass at the bottom of Wellsway, and the Holloway and St Mark's alleyway (although this last is not strictly an entry into Widcombe, it can be forbidding at night).

Halfpenny Bridge & Entry from Bath Spa station We are delighted to learn that BANES are planning shortly to refurbish this most important link with the City centre (pictured above). It is understood that by the end of 2012 the bridge will be repainted in dark green, repaired and resurfaced, with the existing surface being removed beforehand and some of the undergrowth cut back to improve the existing lighting. We anticipate, that for this to happen, the bridge will be closed for a period but as yet we do not have any dates. We are also investigating improving the fence by the station end by installing railings to match those replaced round the new station entrance. Eventually we hope to improve the lighting and safety of this route, but have been informed that lights on the bridge would be 'a danger to ship-ping'! We will continue our efforts to make this important route as safe and attractive as possible.

Riverside and Canal Entrance A major problem here can be the street drinkers who tend to congregate, particularly in the area around Thimble Mill. We recognise that these people are vulnerable and often homeless and usually do not present a threat of any sort, but many people presently avoid this area, and sadly the manager of the Travelodge advises his guests not to use the footpath, and to return to the Hotel at night by taxi.

We called a meeting about the problem, involving police, Julian House workers, The Travelodge manager & local counsellors. The main problem seems that police and security staff move the drinkers on from the town centre and they congregate in Widcombe, where they can sit, drink & buy alcohol easily. In general they are not aggressive, but they can be intimidating, especially when there is a large number of them. The police have increased their patrols and by law can remove the alcohol since this is a designated no drinking space. The problem is seasonal & police urge residents to call 101 (non-emergency) or 999 (emergency) to alert them to come *before* any problems arise. If you have concerns or ideas, please contact me (details on rear cover). Following the meeting, our Chairman sent a letter to McColl's Chief Executive to ask if the company's policy of selling very cheap alcohol (eg 2 litres of 7% proof cider for £2.89) could be reviewed. The reply was non-committal, apart from a promise that McColl's regional manager would be talking to the store manager in Widcombe. More interesting points from this meeting can be found on the WA website.

The canal towpath has suffered badly in the poor weather and we are requesting that the poor surface be repaired to diminish the puddles & mud which make walking and cycling less attractive. Volunteers have done some great work, but there is more to be done and more helpers would be welcome. Please contact John Webb of The Canal Trust on Bath 836133 if you would like to volunteer.

St Mark's-Holloway Alleyway This is a busy pedestrian thoroughfare but it is very overgrown and badly lit, so that it can seem dangerous at night. We are working to plant bulbs to beautify the right hand side of the alley. We are also asking the Council to better maintain the trees, so that it is less dark and overgrown. Better lighting would help everyone feel safer at night.

The fact that pedestrian traffic into Widcombe will become even more important as Rossiter road becomes two-way and the perception by some that the various pedestrian entries into Widcombe are unsafe or unattractive to pedestrians, have led to the establishment of the 'Entry to Widcombe' sub-committee, of which I am a member. As 'Streetscape' has been my responsibility for some time, this role is central to the issue of making the entry to Widcombe as attractive as possible. We are liaising with all interested local groups and residents' associations, B&NES Council, police, and of course our local councillors. The main areas of interest are the Riverside entrance,



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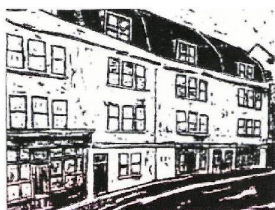
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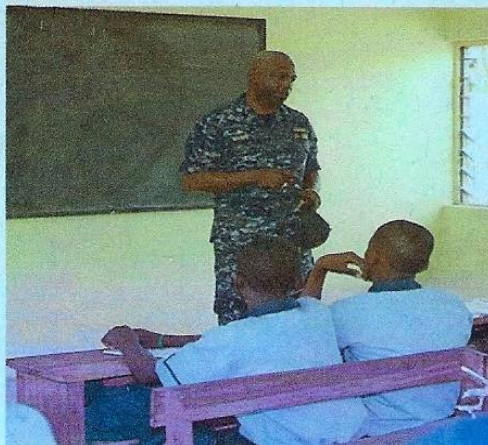
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The Underpass



The underpass at the bottom of Wellsway is well-used, but is at present very dirty and looks neglected. After heavy rain it sometimes floods. The new safety mirrors that were installed have yellow cages to prevent vandalism. Unfortunately, these tend to prevent pedestrians being able to see if anyone is coming! The graffiti is a constant problem. The 'Entry' committee recently held an on-site meeting in the underpass with members of Bath Spa Rotary Club, who are keen to take it on as a project. We would like to see it regularly and thoroughly cleaned and are also investigating the possibility of improving the lighting and appearance in the longer term, possibly by installing some new art work and brightening the underpass so it is safer. Ideally it would be covered by CCTV. If you have any concerns or would like to be involved in helping with any of these projects, please contact Helen Peter on 01225 334936.

PACT Partners & Communities Together

At the last PACT meeting on 25th June, the problem of dealing with Widcombe's street drinkers was decided as a priority for future action.

(see also details of WA meeting opposite)

These meetings are attended by Police and councillors and are an excellent opportunity to voice concerns about policing and other matters in Widcombe.

The next PACT meeting will be held at
Widcombe C of E Junior School at:

7pm on Thursday 18th October

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Widcombe Rising 2012 - Ralph Oswick



As many of you know, I only applied for a road closure order on Claverton St for a spurious street party back in 2004 out of mischievousness. I had found myself on the Cultural Forum Road Closures Sub Committee and I thought I'd test the notoriously obstructive council officers by asking to close one of the busiest trunk roads in the city. Months later, when I had all but forgotten about it, a lady phoned me. 'Are you the man who wants to close Widcombe? I've been told to tell you that if that's what you want, you can have it'. As Nick said at the time 'Flipping heck, we'll have to do it now!'

Far from being obstructive, the various council departments then bent over backwards to make Widcombe Rising 2005 happen. They even suggested making Rossiter Road two way for the occasion, but that came too late, we'd already paid for an elaborate diversion and booked a fairground Waltzer for the junction. Everyone hated the diversion. Diversions it seems are there to be disobeyed by motorists and the organisers always get the blame. Rude words were exchanged and one 'gatekeeper' even got threatened with a golf club.

For all subsequent Risings the two way system has operated, thus proving to one and all that a bypass for Widcombe will work!

Widcombe Rising 2012 by all accounts was the best ever. I say 'all' accounts, but the financial books still need to be balanced. It costs a lot, both in time and money, to deliver a clean, safe, efficient, attraction-packed event of this stature, especially one that has to be set up, happen and be taken down in a thirteen hour envelope. Despite extraordinary generosity by many individuals and businesses, overall fundraising was pretty difficult this time (everyone is feeling the pinch it seems) and everything cost just that little bit more.

Then there were those pesky people who thought they could bring the whole family including Grandpa and avoid paying at the gate. My appeal in the Chronicle for anyone who got in for free but enjoyed themselves to send in their £2.50s resulted in the princely sum of £5 dropping on the mat at NTC.

Currently the deficit stands at about £1500, with just two very patient creditors.

The financial worries, concerns over our own businesses and their problems and the fact that one of the main goals of the event, namely a bypass for Widcombe, has been achieved (not that we are taking full credit for that!) makes us think we might give it a rest for a bit. Besides, the bypass will create a different kind of atmosphere in the street, which may call for a different kind of event.

Our Street Closure Order is in perpetuity as long as we pay the modest renewal fee every year, so watch this space!

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In Conversation

Peter Hendy

*- Widcombe resident and transport supremo -
talks to Paddy Doyle*

Transport is in Peter Hendy's blood – "I used to travel around London by bus as a kid", he says, "and once you do that, you know it all". Later as a youth he could be seen on railway platforms equipped with notebook and pen, earnestly logging locomotives. His first job after University was as a London Transport bus driver and he can still be seen in his leisure time at the wheel of a red Routemaster bus. As the Mayor of London's Commissioner for Transport he is responsible for the efficient working of the road and rail transport systems of the nation's capital, and when I spoke to him in his favourite Widcombe hostelry he had been away from home for 3 weeks without a break facing the biggest challenge of his life: the London 2012 Olympics.

Peter and his wife Sue moved to St Mark's Rd in Widcombe in 1991 – Sue's job took her to Bristol, and with Peter still based in London, they decided to move "somewhere nice between the two". When asked what's special about Widcombe he cites its character: "...all of its own, with great places for eating, drinking and culture - and it's improved greatly over the last 20 years." If he has his way this improvement is about to take a great leap forward, for he, as a member of the Association's Rossiter Rd Sub-committee, has been key to the acceptance by the Council of the scheme to route through traffic away from Widcombe Parade. He is also looking forward to having a hand in the regeneration of our village street: "The sort of thing in my mind is the Bath equivalent of what a small French town might look like: no urban clutter, some nice pleasant pavement, a decent road surface with some cobbles to slow traffic down, the sort of lighting that would make a street look attractive and the buildings cleaned up to look like they should in a village street in Bath. It would also clearly need sensitively-done short term parking."

Not content with playing a key role in the regeneration of Widcombe Parade, he has recently been elected President of Widcombe Social Club and looks forward to a revitalised club: "It's a really exciting prospect. The present building is wrong; it's of its time and life-expired. A new building, properly designed with 21st Century facilities and energy-efficiency - a Widcombe venue suitable to take its part in happenings like the



Bath Festival, is attractive to me. If the Community doesn't do something, someone else will. How are we going to achieve it? Well student flats and a convenience store might not be everyone's cup of tea, but students don't need parking, and a good store that would sell fruit and veg would go a long way to alleviating people's fears. And it wouldn't be displacing existing shops." As he sees it, it's a simple equation: the add-ons will pay for the reconstructed club.

The conversation turns to how someone with such a high-powered job relaxes; "Well, I cycle - and yes I do wear lycra! Ideally I would do Bristol and back on a Sunday morning - and in October I'm doing a 3-day charity bike ride from London to Paris. I like an occasional drink - I've never met anyone in my sort of job who doesn't" (As we speak, he's drinking a large glass of lemonade.) "I like music: my tastes include Bruce Springsteen, Bob Dylan (much to my wife's disgust) and Leonard Cohen (even more to my wife's disgust). I've been known to sing - at Widcombe Rising I performed Ian Dury's 'Sex and Drugs and Rock 'n Roll'". He doesn't say if he's been asked back.

I ask him about his experience of the Olympics. "I've never worked so hard in my life for so long, but everybody's been cheerful and we've had all sorts of people working outrageous hours doing jobs they don't normally do and it's given the whole place a great buzz. It's also been terrific fun - and when you're tired but you've got two hours to spare and you can go and watch someone breaking a World Record and getting a gold medal - actually it gives you a bit of a glow."

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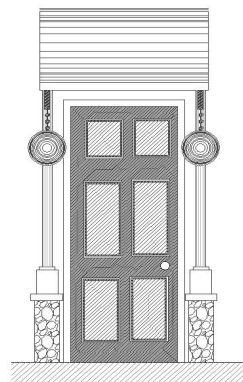
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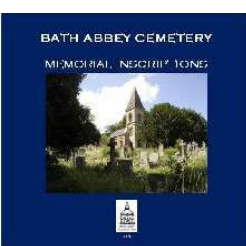
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The **Songs for Widcombe** CD is attractively packaged with views of Widcombe and the Widcombe Rising festival and has 12 terrific tracks, all written and recorded by local musicians. They have given their time and talent to produce a superb tribute to Widcombe. The CD is sold in aid of Widcombe Rising. **Price £5 (plus £1.50 P&P)**



Widcombe Rising

And what about the much-vaunted aspect of legacy? He mentions the Olympic Park, the great sporting legacy, the feeling of pride in London proving itself to be a great World city, and the transport legacy, including the thing of which it seems he is most proud, developments in freight logistics which should become permanent. He expands on freight logistics: "I had feared pubs and shops might run out because of high demand and difficulty with traffic congestion holding up deliveries, so in partnership with the freight industry we got lots of deliveries done at night. The noise problem can be approached by quiet delivery vehicles and specially-designed noiseless trolleys. Deliveries take less time as the traffic moves faster."

During our conversation about music, I'd asked him what was the first record he'd ever bought. The answer surprised me: "*Summer Holiday* by Cliff Richard" Not very hard core, I thought, and then of course, it dawned: the star of the film the song comes from is not Cliff Richard, but a London bus. "...and some day before I die", he says, "I might replicate part of that film - I haven't yet driven a bus from London to Athens, but I might". As we said - transport's in Peter Hendy's blood.

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WA Events

Chris Rogers

Bemoaning the weather is becoming a recurring theme in these reports, so I will get it over with early. Rain tends to keep us rooted indoors – even when the events we might go to are completely sheltered from the elements – so we did suffer this last summer from lower than expected attendances. And of course the Palladian Bridge Picnic – the jewel in the crown of our for-all-the-family events – was rained off. The dogged performers repaired to the welcoming warmth of the Widcombe Social Club, whose patrons (on a day out to Bath Races from their Welsh valley homes) were treated to an unexpected wealth of musical talent which silenced all their boasts about how much money they had won (or lost!) on the day. The event was completely unique for completely unexpected reasons!

Now, here are two figures for you: 1,502 and 1,512. They are only different by 10 and are both just over a hundred years old, but they each tell a very different story: the first is the number of passengers and crew lost in the sinking of RMS Titanic in 1912, and the second is the number of organ pipes in the magnificent 1896 organ in St Matthew's Church.

If you attended the screening of Marion's Milne's film "Titanic – The Aftermath" you will have learned the significance of the first number – and you will have witnessed a music scholar from Prior Park College



playing a violin that once belonged to bandsman Jock Hume who perished when the ship went down, and which was lent to us by Jock's grandson Christopher Ward who was our guest speaker. The event helped us to raise £1,500 for the benefit of Mentoring Plus, a local charity which supports vulnerable young adults.

And if you came to hear Bath Abbey organist Peter King play the organ in St Matthew's Church (*left*) and entertain us with his anecdotes, you might remember that the second figure was the answer to the sweepstake question that contributed to raising £403 for the organ restoration fund.

As the year progressed we Passed on Poems in St Thomas a Beckett Church; we enjoyed taking part in the Quiz and Family Skittles nights in the Widcombe Social Club; we chuckled at Lady Margaret in her new Union Flag dress as she was chauffeured round the street parties of the parish on Jubilee weekend in a Union Flag-styled London cab; we Trailed round a variety of venues in search of unique works of Widcombe Art; we heard tales and songs from Opus Anglicanum in the great English Folk tradition in Prior Park College chapel; we poked our noses into seven very different domestic gardens in Lyncombe Vale Road; we heard a story of love and betrayal on the football terraces in Bath Opera's version of Bizet's Carmen; and we visited a wide range of chapels in Widcombe, some of which are rarely open to the public.

And last, but by no means least, we celebrated the best (and maybe the last?) Widcombe Rising street party, in the knowledge that our 30-year mission to banish the juggernauts from our high street is really, truly going to happen.

And we hope you enjoyed it all as much as we did!

So, given the appalling weather and the fact



Membership

Ann Ashworth

At the time of writing, we have 440 households consisting of 754 individual members. Some technical difficulties have been experienced in printing membership cards so apologies to those who have joined recently and have yet to receive cards. I hope that the problem will be rectified soon.

We will be moving to a new system for managing membership over the next few months and in time for the new subscription year. This will enable members to update their contact information on-line and also to pay subscriptions through PayPal. Apart from messages necessary for the administration of your membership, please be assured that you will not be bombarded with emails! For those of you who do not have an email address, nothing will change. Existing payment methods (Direct Debit, cheque or cash) will continue to remain available for all members.

We welcome members from all parts of Bath and the surrounding area, not only within Widcombe itself. If you are not yet a member and wish to join, please email me at membership@widcombeassociation.org.uk or check out the website for how to join.

The Two Tunnels

In accordance with the agreement made between the WA, Greenway! and the Lyncombe Vale Residents Group, the WA expressed its support for planning permission for a cycle ramp to be built in Lyncombe Vale to access the Two Tunnels Pathway. We stressed in our letter that our support was conditional on the access being constructed, advertised and signposted solely as a way for local residents to get on and off the route, and we opposed any intention that it should form part of an alternative cycle route to the City centre. The planning application has now been closed for further comment, and by the time you read this, the planning decision should have been made.

The pathway is not anticipated to be complete until well into Spring 2013.

Beechen Cliff Stabilisation

Talks between the Council and the National Trust are progressing satisfactorily. We will continue to report on the scheme that should give the Trust ownership of the fields surrounding Beechen Cliff in return for taking over the maintenance and management of the cliff itself.

Help!

Do you enjoy the Newsletter? Do you think you could perhaps produce something a little better? The present editor/compiler has done the job for 6 years, taking the twice-yearly publication from a folded sheet of A3 to what you are now holding in your hands, and would like to hand this task on to someone else. You will need some moderate computer skills and an ability to work twice a year to a deadline.

If you would like to talk about a key role in maintaining the image of the Widcombe Association, call our Secretary, **Liz Littlewood on 01225 333044**

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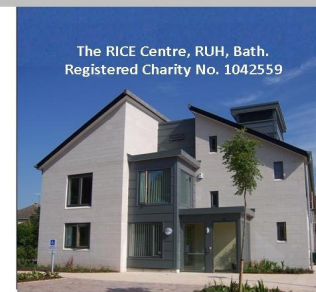
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The Widcombe Choir!



From an idea by Chris Rogers and some hard organisational work by Plodge Robertson and Caroline Davies, the Widcombe Choir became a reality when it met for the first time on Monday September 17th at St Matthew's Church. Over 50 enthusiastic would-be choirsters met their new choir leaders: classically-trained soprano Ruth Mc Kibbin, who used to lead the Silver Ring Choir, and singer/songwriter Su Hart who leads the Walcot State Choir. The eclectic mix of leaders will ensure a wonderfully diverse repertoire. Everyone is welcome and there are no auditions. The choir will meet every Monday at 7.30pm at St Matthews Church. While membership is available, your first session will be free of charge, and thereafter £5 will be levied for every session you attend.

Should you be wondering whether or not it's for you, consider this from Dr James le Fanu: *"Singing involves virtually every muscle group, vibrating the whole system like a tonic massage. It increases lung capacity, improves posture, clears the sinuses and boosts mental alertness by increasing the amount of oxygen in the blood. And for good measure it exercises the facial muscles - helping to maintain youthful good looks."*

(Photo by Helen Peter shows Ruth McKibbin addressing enthusiastic founder choir-members)

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CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF ENTERTAINING BATH



Zenith Youth Theatre Company (formerly known as Bodlets) is a completely voluntary run organisation that has been producing musical theatre in Bath for almost half a century.

From May 2013 we will be entering our Golden Anniversary year and we plan a whole series of events and performances to celebrate 50 years of entertaining Bath. Visit www.zenithyc.co.uk for further details.

As part of the centenary year, we are launching a £50k for 50 years fundraising appeal, not only to ensure that Zenith is here for another 50 years, but to help nurture home grown talent in Bath and to donate some investment capital to our community shared rehearsal and storage space in Bath - St Marks Community Centre

that our usual magnificent opera venue was not available to us, how did we do? In fact, surprisingly well, with just under £5,000 raised, which is on a par with the preceding two years. Many thanks to the members of the WA Events Sub-Committee, the WA Organisers' Forum, all our volunteers and helpers – and of course to you, our members, for coming and supporting our events.

Over the coming year you can expect us to keep you entertained with our now-established programme of regular year-long events – and as the weather improves (fingers crossed!) in 2013, you should look out for some innovative outdoor events involving bicycles and beatings. Bicycles because we'd like you all to come out riding with us, and beatings because we are going to be marking out our parish once again in the time-honoured tradition that is the Beating of the Bounds. Confused? Keep a watch on the web site and all will be revealed in due course!

Our **Christmas Craft Fair** will be held this year on **Saturday 24th November** in St Matthew's Church Hall. And please note that the annual Widcombe Art Trail is being brought forward to May next year so it can join with other art trails in the city. Would-be exhibitors at these events should contact Sarah Lewis on 01225 315491 or sarahalewis@btinternet.com.

As ever, your ideas and support are welcome. Even if you can't commit to serving on our committee, perhaps you'd consider helping to organize an event on a one-off basis? Do let us know and come and meet us over a sociable drink!

Widcombe Association 6th Craft Fair

Soon it will be the Fair season, and in Widcombe ours is on **Saturday 24 November** at St Matthew's, 10.30-5pm. – be sure to visit if you want to find quality work by local artists and crafts people, and buy that special present directly from the maker! Commission your own pieces! The fair will be bigger than ever with new talent as well as regular contributors, including ceramics, jewellery, textiles, pictures, cards. Details of all the exhibitors will appear on the website as well as on our flier..

The WA Social Lunch Club

Come and meet friends and get to know neighbours over a Sunday roast at one of Widcombe's fine hostelryes! The first meeting of the Social Lunch Club will take place at **12:30pm on Sunday 4th November** at the **Royal Oak** in Summerlays Place and the cost is £10. Book your place in advance by contacting Lesley Stacy-Marks on 01225 333264 or lesleysm@talktalk.net. And why not bring a friend or neighbour? If you're interested in the idea but can't make this one, contact Lesley to find out when the next one is happening.

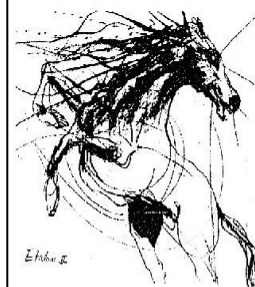
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Business Members*Ann Ashworth*

We now have 53 local businesses who have signed up as members. Information on the full range of businesses, shops and restaurants which make Widcombe such a vibrant place to live and visit can be found on the website. Many businesses offer WA members a generous discount, details of which are shown on the back cover of this newsletter. Businesses that have joined since the previous newsletter are:

Action on Hearing Loss supports people with hearing loss and tinnitus. They have a day services workshop on Wells Rd providing occupational, educational and work-focused opportunities for deaf, hard-of-hearing and dual-sensory impaired adults with additional needs. For more information on the Bath workshop please email bathworkshop@hearingloss.org.uk

Those of you following the Widcombe Art Trail this summer will have had the opportunity to see some of **Jessica Palmer's** intricate paper images. Jessica's collages, cuttings and paper sculpture are used for design, illustration and decoration. More information and examples of Jessica's work can be found at www.jessicapalmerart.com or call 07701 024530.

Bath Violins has now relocated and we are pleased to welcome **Catherine Beale** to her new studio and gallery on Widcombe Parade. Catherine is a water colour artist and undertakes contemporary painting to commission and exhibition. For information on studio and gallery opening times and to see examples of her work, visit www.catherinebeale.com or call 07891409490.

We hope that members will continue to support these and the other Widcombe Association Business Members.



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FoBRA*Liz Littlewood*

The list of issues which the Federation of Bath Residents' Associations attempts to address in its quest to represent the concerns of local residents becomes increasingly long as more and more initiatives unroll. It was decided, therefore, that, for the next couple of years, FoBRA would focus on four priority issues to be decided by the member Associations. Some round table discussion produced a long list of ten from which individual Associations selected the four that they felt most important. The outcome is that focus will be on Transport, Public Realm, Planning and Major Developments, and Governance for the foreseeable future. The Widcombe Association had listed the first three but had included the Riverside as its other option.

It is to be hoped that by concentrating on these issues, which are of prime importance to member Associations, the influence and effectiveness of FoBRA will be improved.

Three FoBRA representatives, of whom Richard Wales, representing the BA2 area, was one, attended the recent Council-sponsored Transport Conference. There has, as yet, been no feedback from FoBRA on the Conference. But it was intended that this event should help to initiate the formulation of a comprehensive Transport policy for the city.



Widcombe and Lyncombe Local History Society
Autumn Programme 2012

All meetings at 7.30pm in Widcombe
Baptist Church Lower Hall

Thursday 11 October

Mike Chapman, of the Survey of Old Bath and one of our members, will give an illustrated talk covering new research on *The slaughterhouses, markets and stables in the area of the Grand Parade.*

Thursday 15 November

Nurseries, market gardens and orchards

A talk by **Ann Wyatt**, who has discovered their importance in our area over the centuries.

Thursday 6 December

Member's Evening

with wine, refreshments and mince pies.

Come and talk about your researches.

Garden Club

Evening meetings at the Prior Park Garden Centre Café start at 7.30 pm

Saturday October 13th 2012

Private Visit to the Garden House
Dyrham Home of Garden Designer Penny
Ross and Stephen Ross and on to Dyham
Park for tea.

To book contact Alex Nash 07891637253
use own transport

Monday 29th October 2012

Growing Apples and Pears in your Garden

JONATHAN HOSKYNs of Somerstock
a co-operative of family owned nurseries
Bring your apples for identification!

Monday 26th November 2012

The History and Restoration of
Painswick Rococo Garden

PAUL MOIR

Director at Painswick Rococo Garden

Monday 28th January 2013

John Tucker's 'Which' Guide to the best in
Garden Plants, Tools and Equipment

A light-hearted talk by **JOHN TUCKER** of the
Prior Park Garden Centre

Monday 25th February 2013

How to create the Perfect Pond or
Water Feature
RICHARD BROOK

Ponds and aquatics of Bath

Monday 25th March 2013

How to attract Insects and other wildlife to
your Garden
DIANA REDFERN

Monday 29th April 2013

The Classic English Border
PAUL GILMOUR

Plant expert at Cadbury Garden Centre

The outing in May/June 2013 to be an-
nounced

Entry £4.00~Widcombe Association members
£3.00~Wine and nibbles

Contact details Alex Nash 01225 314924
e-mail fatj@limenash.freemove.co.uk