

OurTown



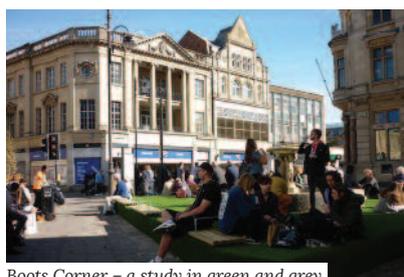
The Newsletter of Cheltenham Civic Society

Issue 13 | December 2018

Your regular update on how we are working to keep CHELTENHAM a great place to thrive



Boots Corner, in earlier times



Boots Corner – a study in green and grey



Boots Corner – a wet Tuesday morning



Boots Corner – the same Tuesday morning

Booton on Boots Corner

Our new Chairman, Andrew Booton, has hit the ground running with this controversial matter. To find out more about him and his plans, turn to page 2 after you've read his thoughts below.

Mention Boots Corner to anyone in town and one is greeted with either rolling eyes or a snort of some kind. But it is not just about closing a road to through traffic; it is about a whole host of associated issues, all of which are important in themselves.

There is a need to integrate transport, including pedestrians, cyclists, taxis, buses and coaches. Our railway station is outside the town centre, which adds further complexity to linking rail to other transport modes. There is a desire to limit vehicle usage to reduce congestion and pollution and, with that, comes the need to improve electric vehicle infrastructure.

As if those transport issues were not enough, there is concern over town centre shopping on the generic 'high street', ensuring economic sustainability in an increasingly distorted and fragile market. The installation of unsympathetic street furniture in a conservation area has not helped to convince people that decision-makers are sensitive to public feeling or, indeed, their civic duties. The debate is further fogged by the political tension between Gloucestershire County Council, Cheltenham Borough Council and our MP.

The increasingly polarised opinions, the imperfect implementation of the trial, and the reluctance to discuss anything until the trial is over, has caused the debate to close down rather than open up.

The Civic Society's response (mailed with this newsletter to members and

regular recipients) seeks to balance the pros and cons of the scheme in order to deliver an outcome that meets the broadest levels of satisfaction. We will continue to monitor both the debate and the trial. It is clear that the town needs to be bold and objective to deliver safe, healthy and sustainable solutions. Do we have a part to play? Yes, we do, and we are well placed to act as a critical friend to the town, to ensure the solution is the best it can be.

The Paterson Memorial Lecture 2018

Due to unforeseen circumstances, **George Ferguson** will now be unable to present the Paterson Memorial Lecture. Rather than compromise the quality of this event, the trustees have regretfully decided to cancel this year's lecture. We are sorry to disappoint members.

What's in OurTown this time

Letter from our new Chairman
Diary dates – upcoming events
“Change is the only constant”

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Bidding to better the town centre
High Street – a green corridor in the making
New lives for old – industrial buildings in Cheltenham and Gloucester
Waste and recycling – a guided tour

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Waste and recycling – a guided tour

Peter Sayers



What happens to all our rubbish? Eight civic society members, from across Gloucestershire, visited Ubico Ltd in Swindon Road on 2 October to find out. Led by Nigel Surman, chair of the Gloucestershire civic societies group, we enjoyed a tour of the complex, much larger and more interesting than one might suppose.

A number of local councils have formed a Gloucestershire Joint Waste Committee seated in Gloucester and are shareholders in Ubico: Cotswold District, Cheltenham Borough, Forest of Dean District, Gloucestershire County, Stroud District, Tewkesbury Borough and West Oxfordshire District Councils. Ubico is responsible to these shareholders and operates as a not-for-profit enterprise. Interestingly, Gloucester City Council uses Amey for its waste and recycling!

Each council has evolved differing methods and systems for waste collection, and the debate is still active as to whether mixed recycling or customer separated recycling is most efficient. Ubico deals with all these separate systems and we saw a huge

mountain of mixed recycling from Tewkesbury Borough, awaiting hand sorting. In contrast, Cheltenham uses a customer-sorted system of different boxes for different items. Fine when customers put the correct items in the correct boxes but, of course, not always done so. The Operations Manager, **Marc Osman**, warned that a number of injuries have occurred to collection staff when people put broken glass into a recycling box (note: it should be wrapped and put with general rubbish).

Ubico's CEO, **Gareth Edmundson**, explained the advantages and disadvantages with each system and how this affects the resale of recycled materials. The debate continues.

As a footnote, the name Ubico was decided by a staff poll, and is a play on the ubiquitous nature of their service to us all.

Next issue: changes or improvements being considered; what happens to recycled stuff; how much money does it raise; what is reused in the county, e.g. green waste?

Cheltenham's battlefield crosses

An update on our Stop Press in the September issue, from Freddie Gick, Battlefield Crosses project manager.

Many readers will know that, in the First World War, crosses were placed on the burial sites of the fallen. These were taken to the UK when the Commonwealth War Graves Commission took responsibility for the war cemeteries abroad. The returned crosses were offered to the families of the men they commemorated, and the twenty two crosses in Bouncers Lane cemetery were those that were not claimed in Cheltenham.

Although they were conserved and repositioned in 1987, they have spent the last thirty years attached to a structure in the cemetery, exposed to the wind and rain, and had begun to show serious signs of deterioration.

Now, thanks to the award of £9,800 from the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Civic Society has had the crosses worked on at the Surrey studios of Artefacts Conservation Services to make sure that they are in good condition in time for the centenary of the 1918 Armistice.

Meanwhile, a team of thirteen pupils from Pittville School has been working hard with their teacher, **Hannah Taylor**, researching the men commemorated by the crosses. By the time this issue is published they will have been to local museums, the Imperial War Museum and the National Archive in Kew as part of their project. They are also preparing an exhibition of their work, a booklet, and learning materials for other schools that may wish to do similar studies.

Finally, a talk on the whole project will be given by **Freddie Gick** in Parmoor House on **7 May 2019** and the crosses are to be re-dedicated at a special church service in the Minster on **11 May**, ninety-five years after their original dedication on **27 April 1924**.

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Cheltenham Development Task Force,
Fiona Clarke, Gloucester Citizen – 28 April 1911,
Jim Markland, Amber Patrick, Peter Sayers.

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**New
members
– welcome**

- **Veronica Emary**
- **David J Gibbons**
- **Michael Illott**
- **Robert Lister**
- **Catriona Murray**
- **Elizabeth Symes**