

Cheltenham Heritage Open Days, 11-20 September 2020

Dates for CHODs 2020 are 11-13 and 18-20 September



**Meeting of participants
Monday 20 January 2020 at 11.00am
Municipal Offices**

Abbreviations: CBC = Cheltenham Borough Council; CBID = Cheltenham Business Improvement District; CHODs = Cheltenham Heritage Open Days; TCT = The Cheltenham Trust

Present: Sarah Harvey, Art Works (chair), Tess Beck (freelance), Fiona Clarke (Civic Society), Gill Coombs (Tourist Information Centre), Beck Donaldson (Christ Church), Janet Kemp (St Andrew's Reformed Church), Roger Little (Masonic Hall), Neela Mann (freelance), Mary Moxham (Blue Guide), Rachel Roberts (Cheltenham Ladies' College), Paul Scott (Cheltenham Playhouse), David Williams (Parish of Uckington and Elmstone Hardwicke)

1 Apologies –Jill Barlow (Cheltenham Local History Society), Kirsty Bradbury (Cobalt, Linton House), David Elder (walks), Megan Furze (Cheltenham Racecourse), Elise Hoadley (Leckhampton Court), Louise Hughes (Univ of Glos archivist), Sylvia Lauder (St Luke's Church), Stuart Manton (talks), Sue Marlow, Sir Robert Morland (New Club), Christine Ormerod, (Cheltenham Minster), Jenny Silverston (Cheltenham Synagogue), Barry Simon (Swindon Village), Annette Wright (CBC)

2 Welcome

David Williams from Uckington and Elmstone Hardwicke was welcomed back for 2020. Tess Beck was welcomed as a potential helper on the national theme 'Hidden Nature'.

3 Cheltenham HODs 2020 - refer the notes circulated before the meeting

3.1 Finance – FC had received an assurance that CBC was contribute £2000 for 2020, reimbursed on receipt of a brief report and a financial breakdown. SH will meet Glide Media to analyse if CHODs is getting full value for money with the current distribution of brochures. Without many statistics it is difficult to know how many 2019 visitors came from outside Cheltenham. Perhaps we should drop the distribution outside the town and distribute ourselves to local shops, cafes, surgeries etc. For 2020, CBID had offered the services of their Ambassadors (at no cost) to

hand out fliers (probably the diary and map pages of the brochure) in the town centre on either or both weekends. FC has yet to approach TCT about CHODs staffing one or more of the red telephone boxes in the Prom to hand out fliers or the brochure itself during the two long weekends. It is hoped there would be no charge for this.

3.2 Schedule for participants – HODs had e-mailed the schedule to those who have registered (see attachment 1 if not already registered or the e-mail wasn't opened!) Registration of events etc. opens in early March and the 'early bird' deadline is 1 May. CHODs's schedule is the same as the national one; i.e. entries to be submitted to SH by 31 May. SH will e-mail the template in early May.

3.3 National website (and evaluation) - . It is crucial that all participants register with HODs and all events are listed on the website. This is also necessary for obtaining insurance cover, especially walks and talks. SH and FC will help participants register if asked. By registering, participants also receive e-mails with important information, e.g. templates for fliers, posters, all the tools for evaluation. Participants are encouraged to be more proactive in finding out where visitors come from and how they learned about the event. HODs provides a 'visitors' book' template and if necessary, the participant can fill it on if the visitor is reluctant. TB suggested an online evaluation form with the offer of a prize - this might encourage more input from the visitors. Marketing Cheltenham listed CHODs events in 2019; it will be relatively easy to update this information for 2020. SH will pass the details on.

It is probably not worth setting up a CHODs website as there is a Facebook page which is receiving an increasing number of 'likes' etc.

3.4 Update on buildings, walks, talks etc.

Mike Bottomley is visiting some possible new buildings including **sports venues**

The national theme is '**Hidden Nature**' and HODs has just e-mailed more information about this. It can be as simple as looking at carvings and stained glass in churches which depict animals and plants to specially designed walks around green spaces. GC reminded participants that CBC has several self-guided tree walks, (Pittville, Montpellier, and Sandford Park) which are available in the TIC. Sandford Park includes the Italian Garden and the Unwin Fountain. FC will ask CBC Senior Trees Officer if he will lead one walk around the most historic park. David Elder knows the history of Naunton Park; other parks to consider are Hatherley, Imperial Gardens, Jenner Gardens and Skillicorne Gardens behind the Town Hall, Honeybourne and Winston Churchill Gardens, St Marks' and Pilley Bridge. TB will investigate most of these, except Pilley Bridge which NM will check on. NM will also ask Adrian Barlow about carvings in churches. FC noted that All Saints' Church is covered in plant paintings inside. Ironwork can also depict plants. NM offered to check on The Wilson's Edward Wilson's drawings. GC suggested a children's' trail.

PS was concerned that walks and talks filled up quickly and publicity on the weekends might lead to much disappointment for those booking late in the day. One solution is to have more talks in buildings where there is greater capacity. JK offered **St Andrew's Reformed Church** as one such venue.

RR plans something for **young adolescents** at Cheltenham Ladies' College.

DW thought Uckington could offer **paintings and photos (on a nature theme)** by parishioners with such hobbies.

MM will tweak her **Chelt backwaters walk** to include more 'nature'; she wondered if the Cheltenham Hospitality Association could help with fliers/brochure hosting, and if some could be available electronically. BD plans something **musical on the**

creation theme and two talks on stained glass at Christ Church; NM offered a talk on some of the important plaque in the church.

Friends of Pittville had not responded (but FC has some ideas to put to the group).

TB thought the University of Gloucestershire might run a **bat walk** and there was also a **wildlife walk around Park Campus** (also a leaflet). TB will investigate.

NM offered her services for either or both weekend; Cheltenham Playhouse will be open on 13 September; Cambray Baptist Church too. There could also be a Cheltenham cemetery walk especially if the Battlefield Crosses were rehoused by September.

GC said the issuing of tickets had gone smoothly and that the TIC would hand out any self-guided walks. E.g. tree walks, the CHODs walks.

SH will send an excel spreadsheet with these Notes for participants to fill in their plans. She will update it regularly so that clashes of dates are kept to a minimum.

4 History festival idea - refer the notes circulated before the meeting

The following comments were made: when would it happen; was it at the same time as the Gloucester History Festival (GHF); would it be seen as competition to the GHF; GHF seems to be attracting a national audience, with national speakers; it is more family oriented; it can charge for events etc. so has more money to play with; there is more flexibility with a festival – wider range of authors and can charge accordingly; but insurance might be a problem if Cheltenham offered walks as part of a festival; would more volunteers be needed to staff buildings – it is already a challenge for some venues; should Cheltenham have a dedicated website if it had a festival; why were Cheltenham businesses sponsoring GHF and not supporting CHODs? It was agreed to continue the discussion but any change would be unlikely before 2022.

5 Any other business

SH will approach any businesses suggested by CHODs participants for additional **funding**. Honeybourne Gate is still available for the **brochure launch** in July. SH has approached Manor by the Lake but has not yet had a reply. If Honeybourne Gate is used, more can be made of the Lower High Street. Another possible venue is the bowling green in High Street. RR proposed **a vote of thanks** to GC and the TIC team for handling the ticketing so well in 2019.

6 Date of next meeting

The next meeting is Monday 2 March 2020 at 11am in the Sherborne Room, Municipal Offices. The meeting after that will not be in a Monday so others can attend.

Fiona Clarke, CCS

22 January 2020