

Saffron Walden Museum Society

Report to Museum Management Task Group : 1st June, 2006

The Executive Committee met on 16th March and 26th May, 2006; the Management Committee met on 11th May, 2006.

Heritage Quest Centre

Tony Watson and David Laing have had meetings and correspondence with Councillor David Morson and UDC Legal Department regarding the proposed establishment of a charitable trust by UDC to deal with the receipt of monies for the HQC. Their efforts proved fruitful when this course of action was agreed at a full Council Meeting in April. It will be necessary for this charitable trust to be registered as a limited company at Companies House. This charitable trust will be more likely to enable successful approaches to organisations such as ENTRUST. The Museum Society is continuing to give full support to all fundraising activities for the HQC.

Accreditation

Reports prepared by the Curator in anticipation of an application for accreditation later in 2006 have been approved.

Forward Plan

The Museum Society has agreed to fund an architectural Feasibility Study into the use and needs of and the potential for extension of Museum display areas and facilities. Appropriate funds have been allocated for this purpose.

Future Plans

Members of the Museum Society have had a meeting with Councillors, the Curator and English Heritage regarding the castle site and a keen interest in developments in this area is being maintained.

Signage

The question of identifying more clearly the entrances to the Museum has been under consideration and investigations regarding additional signage and refurbishment of existing signs are under way.

Membership

A new Membership Officer has been appointed, Ann Holloway, who is revising the database of Members separately from others on the Society's records. Application forms now enable donations or subscriptions to be made by debit or credit card, although there is a cost to the Society.

A new Events Organiser - Sarah Fowler - has been appointed and the continuing high standard and wide range of subjects offered for the monthly talks for Members will continue. Attendances have been greater in recent months and, with the restricted space available in the Museum, the Society is now hiring St Mary's Parish Rooms on a regular basis in order that the larger numbers can be accommodated. The Society will incur greater expenditure as a result and is looking at the costings involved.

Purchase of equipment

The microscope and monitor in Natural History Discovery centre is in terminal decline and the Museum Society has agreed to refund a replacement at a cost of some £1,040 + VAT.

A gold pennanular ring found in Takeley has been valued at £600; this may qualify for a V & A purchase grant, but the Society has agreed to pay whatever sum may be needed to secure this for the Museum.

Annual General Meeting

This will be held this year at 8.00 pm on Thursday, 8th June, at the Museum. Full copies of the new Constitution and Rules, now approved by the Charity Commission, will be available at the meeting.

-oOo-