

Notes of the Civic Society Public Meeting Held at St Faiths Church Thursday 26th April 2018.

1. Attendance about 60 people including HBC two ward councillors. A number paid their subscriptions or took a form to pay online.

2. Bob Comlay chaired the meeting.

3. **Havant Local Plan to 2036.** David Hayward made a presentation on draft Havant Local Plan to 2036. Questions followed including on the Havant Thicket Reservoir, the possible development of the East Pallant car park and the proposal in the plan to take East Street out of the Town Centre.

4. **The St Faiths Churchyard Project.** Churchwarden and ecologist Colin Hedley presented on this project to make the churchyard accessible to all and to improve the ecology. He also outlined the other projects some recently completed at the Pallant Centre and the internal improvements underway in the church including a new kitchen area and the first decorating for sixty years.

5. **The Gazebo Garden.** Anna Glanville Hearson, garden coordinator, made a presentation on the recent refurbishment of the gazebo building and the replanting of the garden funded by a £20,000 National Lottery grant. Anna also spoke about the volunteers who look after the garden and invited more volunteers. Groups are welcome to visit. The first group visit a photographic group from Emsworth visited recently. A programme of community events is being drawn up.

6. **The Havant Signal Box.** Ann Buckley made a presentation on the signal box which is a grade two listed building and has fallen into disrepair since it closed. Network Rail has not looked after the signal box since the closure and the building is covered in ivy. Following on the success of the Gazebo Garden there is scope for a similar project with the signal box. This could be improving the external appearance and vegetation removal or possibly taking over a lease on the box and restoring it with view to opening to the public. A bike hire project making use of the Hayling Billy cycle track on the "Shiprights Way" could link with this. Volunteers are needed for the steering committee and the first meeting will be held shortly.

7. **The Old Town Centre.** Bob Comlay introduced a presentation on the old town centre in the St Faith Conservation Area. Most of the sites that have been given planning consent for homes have not progressed. These sites are; West Street, East Street, Wessex site and Market Parade. The state of the empty sites is impacting on surrounding buildings particularly in East Street where many listed buildings are in a run- down state. Questions followed on recent parking issues in the Twittens and the deterioration of that area off South Street. Residents were critical of HBC in dealing with this. David Hayward was asked about the Local Development Order for Market Parade. One resident commented 'what is the point of a conservation area if it is not conserved?' Part of the Street's site and adjoining site in East Street are now up for sale. There is a planning application for the former Filarinski building in East Street. This is for change of use to dog grooming retaining some retail. Councillor Pike was present and replied to some of these questions. 8. Bob Comlay thanked the speakers and members .The meeting closed at 9.30pm.

Media coverage followed on the old town centre. Following the meeting there was front page press coverage in the News on April 30th.With a follow up article on the small businesses' view of the old town centre. Links to both articles will be published on the HCS web site. Local radio picked up on the issue and contacted Ann Buckley about a 15 minute interview with Express FM on 3rd May.