

## WELCOME TO THE THIRD OF OUR REGULAR UPDATES.

*The focus of activity since the New Year has been the marketing of the North Place & Portland Street sites. Some concern was raised over the timing of this activity given the economic uncertainty since 2009. However the Task Force has been confident that Cheltenham has some unique sites that would attract interest from developers and investors if packaged in the right way and we have worked closely with our agents to generate significant interest. More details below.*

In addition to this we have been impressed with the energy and imagination shown by the owners of the Brewery in bringing forward initial proposals to create a new link with the High Street.

With County Council colleagues we continue to work on possible traffic improvements including the location of town centre car parking.

We have a strong interest in the development of ideas for Imperial Gardens and Montpellier. Both are important as open spaces and as attractions to support the town's economy. These and other spaces are vital to Cheltenham's character and future strength.

And finally it was pleasing to see the frenetic activity generated by race week.



Graham Garbutt – Independent Chair



## MEET A BOARD MEMBER Robert Duncan



Robert Duncan came to Cheltenham in the early 1970's and has worked in the commercial property in Gloucestershire and the West Midlands for over 30 years. During that period he has acted for many Cheltenham based Companies as well as Government Departments across the Country. Although still living in Cheltenham he spent 10 years in Birmingham before returning to the Town in 2005 and now acts as a Consultant for a number of Companies. He has always had an interest in the success of the Town.

He is married with one daughter and two step daughters who went to school here. A keen sportsman, he played hockey and cricket for the Town and is a life Vice President of Cheltenham Cricket Club. His sporting activities these days revolve around golf and supporting Gloucester Rugby.

## NORTH PLACE AND PORTLAND STREET



The process of progressing the disposal of North place & Portland street car parks continues at pace.

In January an OJEU (Official Journal of the European Union) notice was posted which triggered the start of a process that will hopefully culminate in the identification of a preferred scheme and bidder by the end of the year. The process (to date) has involved interested parties completing a Pre Qualification Questionnaire to demonstrate their financial and experience credentials to take on such a site. From those interested 5 parties will be selected to develop an Outline Solution and from those 2 will be selected to submit a Detailed Solution and ultimately this will result in a preferred bidder (and scheme) by the end of the year.

It is pleasing to note that significant interest was generated with 115 organisations requesting access to the full bidding process. This resulted in the submission of 9 bids. The reduction is normal and reflects the difference between interest and commitment and also the fact that many interested parties will have formed consortia in order to pursue the opportunity.

At the time of writing a team is actively evaluating the submitted bids in order to reduce the number to 5. At which point the successful bidders will be provided with an information pack detailing key data and reports on archaeology, title, ground conditions, the historic environment etc which will help to inform their analysis and allow the consortia to develop "outline solutions" – both physical and financial.

These will then be the subject of further evaluation to reduce the bidders to two who will be invited to submit their "detailed solutions" from which a preferred option will be selected. Once down to the last two it is anticipated that the bidding consortia will be seeking the public's feedback to their proposals.

## TRAFFIC MODELLING

The Task force has been working with County partners on a Local Sustainable Transport Bid. If successful this, along with contributions from developers and other partners will allow both the hard measures such as junction alterations and the soft measures such as encouraging non-car transport as demonstrated in Worcester to deliver the traffic changes modelled by the Paramics computer model. This would ultimately result in the closure of Boots Corner to through traffic.

## UPDATES

Presentations were made to a well attended Business Pride Forum on 10th February to Women in Property on 2nd March and to Councillors on 28th March 2011.

The successful Heritage lottery Fund bid for the exciting redevelopment of the Art Gallery and Museum along with the proposed changes to Boots corner and the Brewery will provide a great impetus to bring forward improvements to St Mary's churchyard. The churchyard is a significant medieval site that many believe has great opportunity to improve its attractiveness both as a thoroughfare connecting busy streets (Clarence Street and High Street) but also as a meeting point in its own right.



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