



WATER IN THE WELLS WORKING GROUP

REPORT TO THE TOWN FORUM 5 July 2018

The Working Group met on 17 April and will meet again on 11 July

This report only covers sites where there have been some changes since the last full Town Forum meeting. Items have been arranged in ascending order of importance.

- **Knights Wood:** responsibility for managing the water feature has been transferred by Dandara to a management company.
- **Owlsnest Wood:** the planning application has been rejected by TWBC. So, chances of seeing the lake and the fountain restored are currently slim.
- **Mount Edgcumbe:** an attractive small water feature has been installed in the outside dining area.
- **Calverley Grounds Ice Rink:** we note that a decision has been taken to continue with the Ice Rink – our only frozen water feature - during construction of the new theatre and the Council Offices. We are concerned that measures be taken to ensure adequate access that will not be detrimental to the Grounds.
- **The Dairy:** water is now flowing, and bright flowers have been planted round the feature, but the installation has yet to be completed with the promised milk churns. Although residents like the sound of flowing water, the design and execution in rusting iron sheeting, has not met with their approval. It is hoped that the eventual addition of milk churns will be an improvement. The allocated Section 106 money is only sufficient to restore the fabric of the fountain in St John's Rec. not to install services so as to resume the flow of water. This is very disappointing. **How much would the restoration of these services cost?**
- **Dunorlan Lake and cascade/fountain:** on my most recent visit three weeks ago, scaffolding was still in place and stonemasons were completing restoration of the stonework and testing water flow. Some spouts were still blocked. Dunorlan urgently needs a capitalisation programme, and money has to be spent regularly on maintenance. **The fountain looks good when it works, but we are still not clear who decides when it should be 'activated'.**
- **Grosvenor and Hilbert:** A contractor has finally been engaged by TWBC to repair the pumps for the Dripping Wells. While we welcome this development, we find it totally unacceptable that it has taken almost a year after the July 2017 storm for the restoration work to be authorised. The lake has filled up with sludge and weeds. Floating on the small amount of water is what looks unpleasantly like sewage effluent. Thankfully, the downpour on 5 July this year did not cause damage to the lake surrounds.

- **Royal Wells Park:** Shortly after a recent service, the 5 July downpour washed a quantity of builders' debris into the filters attached to the lower section. Water flow has been interrupted until they can be cleaned. The upper section is functioning well. Prominence has been greatly improved by the addition of the words **SOMETHING IN THE WATER** in raised stainless steel lettering.
- **FINALLY:** In a previous report, Water in the Wells expressed its wholehearted backing for the initiative of Royal Tunbridge Wells Together to investigate the possibility of installing drinking fountains at key places in the town. The abundance of major new projects in the town presents exciting opportunities for the installation of a variety of water features. If plans are realized, we will soon(?) have a new theatre, new Council Offices, a Cultural and Learning Hub (**The Amelia Scott**), an upgraded Royal Victoria Place, a resurrected Union House on the Pantiles and a new Belvedere at the junction of Church Road and Mount Pleasant.
- These major projects will help refresh the town and make it a more stimulating place to live and work. Can TWBC reassure us that it is doing all within its power to ensure that these new developments will build on and be linked in to our water and health heritage? Can we, as a start, be confident that drinking water fountains will be installed in **The Amelia Scott** and the new Council Offices?

(Michael Holman, Chairman, 'Water in the Wells'. E-mail: michaeldekholman@gmail.com.)