

## REPORT ON PROPOSAL TO INSTAL ELECTICAL POINTS IN MARLBOROUGH HIGH STREET

Background: in September, 2012, Wiltshire Councillor, Nicholas Fogg (Nick), was approached by the Chairman of the Marlborough Chamber of Commerce, Paul Shimell, about the Marlborough Mop Fairs. It was accepted that, as Statute Fairs, established by Act of Parliament, the fairs had a right to occupy the High Street. It was felt, however, that something might be done to reduce the high levels of pollution caused by the generators. Nick agreed to take up the issue with the Western Section of the Showmen's Guild (SG), although he was aware that the fairs are organised around a street plan that it would be difficult to change. The SG was prepared to discuss the issue, but could not see how the proposed changes could be implemented. As a result, Nick suggested that electric points be installed in the High Street. These had already been successfully installed in the Priory Gardens by the Marlborough Arts Association. In November, a group from the Western Section of the Showmen's Guild (WSSG) inspected the High Street, together with Nick and Gordon Olson, who had overseen the system in the Priory Gardens. The Showmen stated that most towns and cities in France and Germany had installed such a system, but there was not a single place in the UK which possessed one.

There would be huge advantages in such a system being installed in the High Street. Amongst these are the following:

- a) the obvious reduction in pollution that would occur during the Mop Fairs with the absence of generators. This would include pollution caused by the fumes and also noise pollution which affects the many people who live in the High Street.
- b) The installation of electric points would also make more space available for further amenities, thereby potentially increasing the income to the local authorities involved.
- c) access to the facility for the Wednesday and Saturday markets, the community market and the various continental markets that take place on a regular basis.
- d) Access to the facility for other events such as the Christmas lights and Apple Day.
- e) An undoubted cost-saving to consumers, thereby increasing profitability and sustaining services to the public.
- f) The potential of creating an access charging point for electrically driven vehicles. Again this would have a sound environmental effect.
- g) The project would be self-financing after the initial outlay and could be expanded through the surpluses it engendered.
- h) It would involve the Marlborough Area Board in a project that would be an exemplar to other places.

For the Area Board to pump-prime such a project would address an important issue raised on page 23 of the Marlborough Area Plan, which refers to the difficulty of obtaining “adequate and sustainable funding for schemes enhancing the local environment”.

### Costings

Gordon Olson (GO) reckons that it would be necessary to have six points to provide access to electrics in the entire High Street. An initial survey demonstrated that this could be achieved without disruption to any other facility: the entire system would be non-obtrusive.

GO considered that each installation would cost in the region of £6,000. In practice this could well be lower. Wiltshire Council Highways Department has expressed enthusiasm for the project and an eagerness to discuss it (see Appendix A below). A project engineer has been appointed to manage their aspects of the project. Part of such a discussion would be to organise the installation of the electrical systems at the time of the forthcoming High Street resurfacing which would undoubtedly cut costs.

GO is also approaching Southern Electric (who provided the Priory Gardens scheme) and, if necessary, other utility companies to see what contribution in kind or otherwise they may be prepared to make to the project. They would have an interest in it in two ways. It would obviously increase the usage of their product. The scheme would also become a model project that would engender regional and even national publicity, thereby encouraging other places to consider such a provision. This would bring great credit to the Marlborough Area Board for its foresight in supporting such a significant scheme.

The WSSG has intimated its intention to approach the national body for funding towards the project. Other foundations could be approached, including the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which has EU funding that could be applied to this project.

Organisation: if Marlborough Town Council were to administer the scheme, there would be advantages and cost-savings in terms of the paying of VAT. Alternatively, it could undertake the organisational implementation of the project, which would amount to the same thing.

There are at least two organisations in Marlborough that are registered charities whose brief would amply cover the administration of such a scheme and they have already intimated their support for it. These are the Community Market and Transition Marlborough. Ideally they would plough back surpluses from the scheme into its expansion until the entire High Street is covered. Such an arrangement would represent self-help at its best.

Proposal: that in the light of the above, the Marlborough Area Board sets aside £12,000 of its surplus funding towards the provision of electrical points in Marlborough High Street.

### APPENDIX A

Letter to Nicholas Fogg from Jim Bailey, Major Maintenance Manager, Highways  
Asset Management and Commissioning, Wiltshire Highways and Transport

Hi Mr Fogg,

Sorry for the delay.

I have discussed the issue with the area team at Chippenham and have allocated a project engineer from our new consultants to manage the project. Jamie Adkins and I would like to meet with you for a preliminary discussion to discuss the scope of the proposed work and the Electrical proposal. Perhaps you would be kind enough give a couple of dates when you would be available to meet.

Regards

Jim Bailey

Nicholas Fogg  
January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2013