

CLITHEROE TOWN WELLS CONSERVATION CAMPAIGN



'To secure a meaningful and lasting future for all three of Clitheroe's Ancient former Public Town Wells'

Draft Minutes of Meeting 240703

Clitheroe Town Wells Conservation Campaign

1.0 Campaign Strategy

Following a Meeting of interested and active parties in this currently stalled Campaign, on 3rd June 2024 it was unanimously agreed that the Campaign should be relaunched. The event which spurred this meeting and outcome was the imminent publication of Andrew Bowes book *'Reflections on the Water'* which some long standing members of this Campaign had the honour and pleasure of proof reading. This new history will be a valuable addition to the existing histories of Clitheroe, building on the work William Self-Weeks, Arthur Langshaw and Cyril Ainsworth's and some very original, insightful and, historically wide ranging research from Andy. The stream which literally runs through this new narrative is the ancient town well sites: Heald Well, St. Mary's Well and Stock Well.

This publication will inevitably renew an interest and appreciation of the significance of these three unique and extant sites to the ancient Parish of Clitheroe and beyond this its Anglo-Saxon antecedent – *'Clyderhow'*. The anticipation of *'Reflections on the Wate'* is what has reignited this Campaign with the single intention to secure **'a lasting and meaningful future for Clitheroe's three ancient well sites'**.

The proposed Strategy for how this is to be achieved is set out below. The approach will undoubtedly change to meet the differing challenges we know will have to be overcome for this community based campaign to succeed this time - the intent will not.

The Strategy

1 Mission Statement:

'To secure a lasting and meaningful future for Clitheroe's three ancient well sites.' [This was unanimously confirmed.](#)

2 Campaign Steering Committee

At the 3rd July meeting the following Steering Committee Members were confirmed:

Steve Burke (Secretary), Retired Conservation Architect; Shirley Penman Clitheroe Archivist and Historian, Steve Ragnall, Local and Navel Historian, Len Middleton, Historic Building Conservator.

3.0 Matters for Discussion

3.1.1 AB's Book 'Reflections on the Water'

3.1.2 Assistance to AB with Publication Launch ? Subsequently agreed and confirmed by AB.

3.1.3 Restrictions on AB in referring to 'ROTW' in any relaunched campaign: *To be limited to an advisory capacity on the historic aspects of the Town Wells*

3.1.3 Tie in with 2024 'Heritage Open Days' 6-15th Sept? This year's Theme is 'Routes, Networks Connections' - a banner which an event to promote the significance of the three former public Town Wells here can be adopted.

4.0 The principle and reasons for relaunching a 'Stand-alone' CTWCC: Discussion – Yes or No? Unanimously 'Yes'.

5.0 Draft Strategy - if yes to 2 above.

6.0 Review of main obstacles encountered previously, including

6.1.1 Varied and differing agendas of the various organisations participating

6.1.2 Absence of Title Deeds for Heald (*correct spelling ???*) and St. Mary's Wells

6.1.3 Reluctance of RVBC to commit time or expense for submitting further applications to HMLR

6.1.4 RVBC unsupported claim that to apply for Registration of Titles would be 'deceitful, unlawful and illegal'. (NB The final position of the Council and the OCO was that 'no further information was held' to support this claim.)

6.1.5 Lack of funds, or interest, to commence active investigations, conservation and Interpretation and the means to acquire these for Stock Well which they now have Full Title for.

7.0 Approach to overcoming obstacles

7.1. A revived Clitheroe Town Wells Conservation Campaign with new '*Mission Statement/Constitution*' with the **single objective** of '*securing a meaningful and lasting future for all three town wells the better interpretation and public awareness of their significance*'

7.2 Obtain further Legal and Academic advice on the costs, legality and procedure for RVBC – or others – to make applications to His Majesties Land Registry (HMLR) for either **Full Possession** (as obtained for Stock Well (the preferred approach). Failing this, to make applications for **Title by Prescription or Adverse Possession** in this order of Preference.

7.3 Liaise further with Clitheroe Town Council, following on from SP & SP's meeting with CTC in March 2023 and their interest 'in principle' to further involvement.

7.4 Offer to RVBC to use Stock Well as a 'Pilot Scheme' for all three. This in the same way as the Pinnacle Project was managed – to RVBC's and the Community's benefit. This on the understanding that they would make applications for Heald Well & St Mary's Wells - as described above - to HMLR. Once Titles obtained - if RVBC reluctant to be involved further – a proposal for CTWCC and/or CTC manage a Phased Conservation Project, similar to that carried out by Clitheroe Civic Society (led by members of this CTWCC Team) at Clitheroe Castle Gardens', 'Houses of Parliament Pinnacle', completed in 2016. This would be at little or no cost to RVBC as was the case for that project.

7.5 RVBC objection to a similar approach, for the three former Public Town Wells, to be potentially countered by ongoing research into the legality - or otherwise - of the claim of '*deceitful, unlawful and illegal*'. This has already commenced by reaching out to UCLan (previously very committed to providing 'hands on assistance') and Manchester University's History Dept. Some initial responses already received.

7.6 **Once Title Deeds obtained Grant applications to be prepared / applied for all three wells.**

7.7 **Stock Well – subject to RVBC engagement.**

7.7.1 Grant Application to Heritage Lottery Fund and any other local, regional or national funding agencies to finance the employment of a professional team of consultants to manage the pilot scheme @ Stock Well

7.7.2 **Archaeological Investigations.**

A) Dig Ventures (or similar) a social enterprise organisation employing crowdfunded archaeological excavation experiences with Grant Aid support. 'DV' is registered with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists and is a ClfA Accredited Field School.

B) University Partnership registered with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists and with a ClfA Accredited Field School, supported by Grant Aid

7.8 **Project Tenders:** for investigation works, Scheme Proposals, Consolidation/ Conservation works comprehensive interpretation of site investigation and historic significance.#

7.9 **Pre-HMLR application Wider Community involvement in tandem with Stock Well Project**

7.9.1: University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) remains interested in participating in this project. Potential assistance from: Chris O'Flaherty Course Leader, School of Engineering and Computing specialising in building conservation and adaptation. Previous assistance included Detailed Physical 2 & 3D Surveys. Professor Duncan Sayer, Professor, School of Law and Policing and a leading expert in historical archaeology. Advice on applications for Heritage Sites without Titles

7.9.2: Manchester University, Professor David Mathews Centre for Medieval and Early Modern Studies. Requested assistance with advice on applications for Registration of Heritage Sites without Titles. Response awaited.

7.9.3: Future Applications to Land Registry: to register Heald Well & Stock Well supported by existing evidence of historic judicial and Maintenance responsibility of RVBC and its municipal forebears assisted by additional Legal & Academic advice.

7.10 Post Registration of Heald Well (& Stock Well): Repeat process as undertaken @ Stock well on a phased basis, Heald Well then St Mary's Well

7.10.1 Heritage Lottery Fund and any other local, regional or national funding agencies to finance the employment of a professional team of Consultants to manage the pilot scheme @ Stock Well .

7.10.2 Dig Ventures (or similar) Dig Ventures is a social enterprise organising crowdfunded archaeological excavation experiences. It is registered with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists and is a ClfA Accredited Field School.

7.10.3 Project Tenders for investigation works, Scheme Proposals, Consolidation/ Conservation Works comprehensive interpretation of site investigation and historic significance.

There was a broad agreement to the Draft approach set out in S3.0 – S7.0 as set out above.

8.0 AOB: Renewed contact with Clitheroe and RVBC Councillors: SB suggested Cllr Ian Brown, (Independent Clitheroe and RVBC Councillor – Salthill Ward) be approached to attend the next CTWCC meeting. This to bring him up to date on the relaunched campaign to **‘a lasting and meaningful future for Clitheroe’s three ancient well sites’**. This as a precursor to enquiries as to how renewed contact should be made, initially, to Clitheroe Civil Parish Councillors for their support in having RVBC reconsider their responsibilities for all three sites. This was unanimously agreed. *Cllr. Brown subsequently agree to attend our next meeting to be held at the New Inn, Parson Lane, Clitheroe on 1st August 2024 @ 11.00 am.*

Steve Burke

Secretary

Clitheroe Town Wells Conservation Campaign

29th July 2024