

## MATLOCK CIVIC ASSOCIATION

### TRUSTEES` ANNUAL REPORT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR April 2023\_-March 2024 (extended to September 2024)

MCA met 9 times in the year with an average attendance of 11, and I am pleased to say membership increased to 28 plus 4 friends. The Trustees remained the same, although David Smith is unable to attend monthly meetings. The financial situation continued to be very healthy due to the earlier bequest from David Barker.

A major project was the design and installation of the large Locomotive Cut Out Artwork on the station footbridge together with an associated lectern/plaque and planters. This project had dragged on for many years, was only completed by Ken's persistence and was unveiled at a ceremony of the interested parties in February 2024.

Thanks to Peter Wild 4 more Blue Plaques have been installed at Jackson House Hydro, Bank House Hydro (Derbyshire Archives), Chesterfield House Hydro (Presentation Convent), and Prospect Place on Wellington Street. Two others have been designed for Chatsworth House Hydro and Oldham House, but changing ownership has delayed installation.

It has been decided that arrangements should be made now for the future transfer of the MCA Charity together with its funds (like a will with a power of attorney) because of ageing of the Trustees and membership and the difficulty of spending our considerable funds due to 'cash strapped' local authorities not being prepared to take ownership of any foreseeable completed MCA projects. After some research it was decided that Matlock Town Council should be the recipient and custodian of MCA at some future date and be required to comply with its charitable objectives and the criteria set down by David Barker, all of which required the drafting of a new Governing Document. Final approval by MCA membership and the Town Council is awaited, but progress is looking good.

One such project, which suffered due to the above local authority pressures and constraints, was the Hydro Themed Artwork for Crown Square or the Park, but it is hoped this can be resurrected as soon as possible. Plans to create a new public viewpoint at Artists Corner have been similarly delayed and we still await feedback on the DCC commissioned viability study of developing the East Bank trail to Matlock Bath.

475 copies of the Jitties Trail booklet have been sold up to September 2024 and Richard has kept supplying our sales outlets in local shops. Brian Wood organised cleaning of the mural, which should be repeated next Spring (2025). Together with the Town Council, and especially Martin Burfoot, some progress has been made to deter lorries damaging the paving outside Gregg's on Bakewell Road but the tarmac patching really needs to be repaired in matching stone and DCC action will be necessary. Discussions

are underway to support costly repair work to the old clock outside Evans jewellers on Dale Road.

Led by Richard Walker we have been very active in making representations on Planning Applications. We secured significant improvements to the Quarry Lane development of 75 houses and have continued to object strongly to the Gritstone Road proposals, which have been rejected so far. However, despite our repeated objections, including speaking at the planning committee meeting, the RBS development has been approved with a flat roof extension, which could be a dangerous precedent in this Conservation Area. We have made representations on design and materials on the Halldale Quarry application, which seems to have stalled.

Richard has also led our submissions on the Local Plan and revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). We have influenced the rebuilding of the Riverside Wall next to Matlock Bridge by the Environment Agency and secured better, matching stone work to the new wall instead of the 'stone in metal cages' originally proposed. We also persuaded EA to add large rocks to mask the harsh concrete wall opposite and it is now softening with new vegetation. However our request to create a viewing terrace on the new wall (possibly with an outdoor café) was unsuccessful. Richard has represented us on the reconvened DDDC Conservation Advisory Forum until March 2024 (since when it has not met). Our involvement with Matlock Community Vision has ceased as it has been wound up with their remaining funds of approximately £400 transferred to MCA by agreement. The redevelopment of the Bakewell Road site, which MCV had championed for 10 years, will remain substantially unchanged apart from the frontage (another opportunity in waiting).

Administration continued with the AGM in November 2023 at which Alan Belton, a member from Essex, described the work of The School of Military Intelligence at Smedley's Hydro (now County Hall) during the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War. A big thank you to Dave Puxley for producing the accounts, managing the investments and renewing our insurance, and many thanks to Brian Wood for auditing the Accounts. Civic Voice emails are circulated as appropriate, the Charity Commission annual return was completed and the Remembrance Service attended.

As usual huge thanks to Ken for all his hard work especially on the frustrating loco cut out project and the complex transfer document. Finally thanks to all our members for their continued support particularly those who are able to make it to the meetings.

Drafted by Tony Symes (Chairman MCA) Revised by Trustees on 25 October 2024  
Agreed by AGM on 11 November 2024

MCA1542