

Social and Community Services

Cogges Manor Farm Museum

Cogges Project Bulletin 1 February 2008

Cogges Project Board established under the leadership of the Director for Social and Community Services, John Jackson.

Oxfordshire County Council has set up a Project Board to focus work on finding a long term sustainable future for Cogges Manor Farm Museum. The Board is meeting monthly and will report to the Cabinet at the end of June. The Board includes two members of the Cabinet, Councillors Louise Chapman and David Robertson, and a representative from the Cogges Trust. The Board has confirmed the County Council's aim to retain public access to Cogges and ensure that heritage education and interpretation continues.

The Board is working with the Cogges Trust to seek external funding, grant aid, and sponsorship and to maximise income potential; and will identify possible commercial partners to achieve necessary investment and increased income from compatible commercial uses. The Cogges Project Board is receiving 'proposals' or offers for the long term future of Cogges; 12 have been received to date. Details cannot be made public at this stage.

Conservation Statement commissioned to identify scope for new uses of buildings at Cogges.

English Heritage has advised commissioning this work before any major changes are considered on the site; the Conservation Statement will review the current Scheduled Ancient Monument and listing status of the site and buildings. The report is due for completion in April.

Plans for 2008 season

Despite the uncertainty over Cogges future, the staff have worked throughout the 'closed' period on numerous improvements and developments in the museum, and have planned the 2008 season and an intensive marketing push to attract visitors. A marketing plan has been prepared and staff are now working to implement the recommendations in that report. An application has been submitted for a grant from Witney Town Council to help fund the marketing improvements; these include: larger print run of leaflets, wider distribution of leaflets, more local advertising for events. West Oxfordshire District Council has agreed to continue to support marketing Cogges.

Opening arrangements are in place for Easter and there will be a busy programme of events and demonstrations throughout the season. The 'farm trail' has been enhanced with new signage. A better value Season Ticket will be available.

Cogges Trust public meeting to be held on **27th February at 7pm in Cogges Church** – ALL WELCOME to attend

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