

## Monmouth Fountains Scheme: update (16<sup>th</sup> August 2020)

The Monmouth Fountains Group last met in February, 2020. This is a regrettable since the group has acted as a great source of ideas, resources, enthusiasm and provided a way of checking progress. Nonetheless, a lot has happened since then and this short report will bring you up-to-date on the four projects that make up the scheme.

**Greenwall Fountain Project:** completed and the flowers are looking absolutely splendid!

### **Jubilee Fountain Project.**



**The Jubilee Fountain**

The project has a comprehensive Engagement Plan (promotion, education and interpretation) designed to better connect people to Monmouth's fountains and appreciate the issues water and waste. It massively adds to the project and is designed to make an important contribution to the well-being of Monmouth. The plan is costed at £10k which brings the total project expenditure to £50/60k.

This is a large amount of money to find and requires the support of a specialist funder. The project is a good fit for the Lottery Heritage Fund and an application has been prepared. Regrettably, with the health crisis, this fund has been temporarily suspended and its future uncertain. An announcement from Lottery is due in October.

It had been hoped that funding from the Rotary Global Grant Scheme (a water and sanitation programme) might be a possibility. With the support of Rotary District 1100

Detailed plans for the renovation have been prepared by Jane Chamberlain of Caroe & Partners (specialist conservation architects). If carried out, they will provide a magnificent fountain that can be safely re-used for drinking. Following a site meeting in July, the Diocesan Advisory Committee has recommended acceptance of the plans to the Church in Wales. This will lead to the issuing of a faculty which is effectively permission to proceed.

Three tenders have been submitted for the physical work which range between £40k and £50k. The architect advises that it is likely that the costs can be reduced by negotiation with contractors.

(who were willing to commit £10.5k to the project) and a magnificent £12.5K (cash and promises) raised locally, it was anticipated that the balance might be levered out of Rotary International. This was not to be. Monmouth's water needs proved not basic enough to qualify for a grant.

This leaves us in a difficult situation. Without the money we cannot proceed. Therefore, the project has had to be temporarily moth balled until such time as the funding situation improves. Unless, that is, someone has a spare £20/30k kicking about that they are anxious to invest in an historic water fountain. Can I ask you to check under the cushions of chairs/settees etc for lost cash; you never know!

### **Skate Park Fountain Project**

The groundwork has been completed, the water supply connected and the fountain bought and ready to install. The Monmouth Of-Street Project, who manage the skate park, will decide when the installation is to happen.

### **The Chippenham Fountain Project**

Transition Monmouth has kindly agreed to manage this project. Their strong support for the re-siting of the play park at Chippenham and their project "Plastic Free Monmouth" make them an appropriate partner to undertake the work.

It is estimated that the project will cost £12/13k Hywel Rees is in the process of preparing a funding application to the Lottery Awards for All programme (still open in Wales). Planning permission has been obtained from the Welsh Government. It is hoped that MCC will manage the fountain as part of their responsibility for Chippenham Mead and its facilities including the re-sited children's play area.

### **Community Working**

The Monmouth Fountains Scheme has not been without its ups and downs and the failure to secure funding to renovate the Jubilee Fountain is a particularly, unwelcome 'down'. However, the scheme has made significant progress in difficult circumstances. Key to progress has been the cooperative working of the various bodies that make up the Monmouth Fountains Group plus the brilliant help of individuals who have kindly carried out a range of tasks and provided lots of help/support. The scheme has impressively brought people together in Monmouth to do something they passionately care about. I thank you for this. It may well be that our aspirations to see four working drinking fountains are delayed but we will get there in the end!

Very best wishes,  
Roger

PS: please do get in touch if you have any thoughts, questions or £20k.