

Salisbury Cathedral Close Preservation Society

"Rus In Urbe"

BULLETIN No 12

Traffic Management in the Close

Since the last Bulletin the Working Party of the Society on Traffic Management in the Close have completed their Report. To compile the report the Working Party were given access to information in the Chapter Clerk's office. After this data had been analysed the Committee agreed with the Working Party that a questionnaire to residents in the Close should be circulated to gain their views. This was sent to all Close residents with a covering letter from the Chairman. A copy of the questionnaire, for comment, was also sent to members of the Society who lived in Salisbury. The response from the residents, many of whom are not Society members, was outstanding. Some 75% returned a completed questionnaire, a most creditable response for any survey, and an indication of the level of concern felt by the residents about the traffic problems

. As a result the Bulletin will, on this occasion, also be sent to residents as well as members of the Society.

The Working Party report has been sent to the Chapter Clerk who has since met the Chairman to discuss the analysis of the questionnaire and the findings of the Working Party's report. At this meeting the Chairman emphasised the Society's view that the primary function of the Close should be regarded as the setting for the Cathedral. People live, work and go to school in the Close and a certain amount of necessary traffic movement is generated as a result. But all efforts should be made to reduce other traffic from using the Close as a route through the town or as a car park.

The Chairman and Chapter Clerk agreed that a number of issues raised in the report could be taken forward by joint working between the Chapter Office staff and members of the Society's Working Party. They would in the first place be asked to address:-

- a) Annual reissue of car entry permits to the Close
- b) Control of traffic using the Close as a "rat run"

A meeting will shortly be arranged to discuss these issues.

Two other matters were raised by the Chairman with the Chapter Clerk.

- c) Relationship of parking charges in the Close with those in the town.
- d) The use of smaller vehicles by firms providing services to residents, schools and businesses in the Close so as to avoid damage to the medieval gates.

The Chairman and Chapter Clerk also discussed the trial one way scheme which had been planned and might be appropriately modified if some traffic reducing measures were introduced.

It is the view of the Committee that the development of an overall strategy to reduce the unnecessary number of vehicles in the Close may involve a number of actions to be taken some of which would not appeal to certain groups of people. However, the

fact that these changes would have the objective of reducing the current "chaos" which reduces the charm of the Close, and as the survey showed are greatly disliked would be of some compensation to those who were inconvenienced by any new measures.

Tree Planting in the Close.

The Society is committed to working with the Dean and Chapter on a programme of renewal for the trees in the Close. It believes in a conservationist policy so that the beauty of the Close will be maintained for the enjoyment of both local people and visitors, whilst supporting new planting for future generations.

There have been heavy tree losses in the Close over recent years, from Dutch Elm disease and the hurricanes in 1987 and 1990. New planting has been undertaken but this is of a wide range of species. Action should be taken now to conserve the harmonious appearance of the Close which is internationally famous from the paintings of Constable and Turner. It is planned to recreate as far as possible the general appearance of the churchyard, as shown in old maps and records, with one species of tree predominating. Limes will replace the elms which have succumbed to a disease which at present is incurable. The Society will be helping this first phase of the project by providing funds for the interplanting of small leaved limes with the existing trees around the churchyard. By these measures the appearance of the Close will gradually be restored and enhanced without carrying out a sweeping and radical programme of tree felling.

Advance Notice of future SCCPS activities.

The Society will once again be holding a Garden Party in Mrs Christopherson's garden in the Close on June 1st 1996. We hope to raise funds for tree planting at this popular event. Please put the date in your diary.

As part of the Salisbury Festival the Society has organised a lecture as one of the "fringe" events. On Monday June 3rd 1996 at 5.30-7.00 pm Tim Tatton-Brown the Cathedral archaeologist has kindly agreed to give the second Society lecture on "The Historic Landscape of the Close". This promises to be a fascinating overview of the appearance of the Close in former times and very relevant to the tree planting project. Watch out for the announcement in the Festival programme and make sure you get a ticket.

Planning applications in the Close

The Society has recently objected to the planning application for the building of 4 more garages adjoining West Walk House on the grounds of it being an unsuitable development for this quiet part of the Close.

Subscriptions to the Society for 1995-1996

Most of our members have either subscribed for this year or completed a standing order form. There are some subscriptions still outstanding which may have been omitted unwittingly. Could members who wish to continue to support the Society's activities, receive future copies of the Bulletin and contribute to the preservation of the Close check whether they are up to date with their subscription. A telephone call to Mrs Brenda McKechnie-Jarvis on 01722 329175 or a note to her at 33, Bedwin Street, Salisbury will ensure you are informed.