



*Proud of the Past - Excited about the Future*

## NEWSLETTER

March 2019

This is to bring you up to date on the various activities of the Initiative since the last Newsletter in March 2018. It has been another busy year for the Initiative.

Events arranged specifically for Members were: in March a guided tour and talk at the Wellcome Genome Campus at Hinxton; in May a visit to Saffron Walden Golf Club; in June a visit to Chesterford Research Park; in October a visit to the English Spirit Distillery in Great Yeldham; in November a talk at the Annual General Meeting by Guy Shackleton, Chairman of the Saffron Walden Round Table; in February a talk and tour of the service wing and stables at Audley End House; and also in February a visit to St Mary's Church Bell Ringers.

Specific events the Initiative organised for the wider community were: in April John Ready organised the Mayor's Walk Around Saffron Walden; in May Initiative members cleaned the Town's fingerposts; in August Jacqui Portway and Peter Riding organised a popular sixteenth Dance in the Square with the Blues Brothers band; in September the seventh Societies Showcase was held in the Town Hall; in November it was the Late Night Christmas Shopping event organised by Patrick Hawke-Smith; and in January there was a Social Quiz in the King's Arms organised by Barbara Wilcox and Ginny Eley.

A new venture for the Initiative in 2018 was the organisation by Jacqui Portway of a Christmas Shop Windows Competition. This year there are 42 entrants and the results were announced by the Mayor at the Christmas Lights Switch On event. The hope is that over the years the town will become known for its Christmas shop windows and attract more visitors.

Throughout the year Chris Hingston for the Initiative has continued to organise monthly *Saffron Business Friends* networking meetings in the King's Arms with a wide range of guest speakers.

During the year John Ready for the Initiative distributed around 200 Welcome Packs for new residents to the area through the Tourist Information Centre and local estate agents.

In 2018 the Initiative took over formal responsibility from Essex Record Office of the oral history Listening Bench installed next to the Museum building. During the year the Bench was used around 1,100 times.

During 2018 the maze at Swan Meadow was closed for a time for re-configuration. All the weeds and plants were removed and replaced with dark blue slate pieces and three more planters with finger mazes and labyrinths were added.

**During 2018 the Initiative paid for the Blue Plaques leaflet to be re-printed for distribution by the Tourist Information Centre.**

**A completed project has been the photographing of all the Listed Buildings in Saffron Walden. This was started off by Barbara Wilcox from the Initiative and then taken over by Dominic Davey from the Camera Club who is also an Initiative member. The photographs, along with copies of their Historic England listings, have been sent to the Planning Department at Uttlesford as well as the Town Council and Essex County Council Archives. It is hoped that they will appear on the District Council's website before too long.**

**Saffron Walden Initiative is registered as a Company Limited by Guarantee which means that we are a Company with no shares and so can be regarded as a non-profit making organisation. The Board is elected by the Members. There are currently 189 registered Members.**

**As a Member you can participate in the activities of the Initiative by suggesting new community projects, member visits and talks and by volunteering to help with organised projects and events. We are always keen to attract new members so members are encouraged to try to recruit friends by bringing them along to events.**

**For the record, the Directors elected at the 2018 Annual General Meeting were: Chris Hingston, Chris Knight, David Pearl, Jacqui Portway, John Ready, Peter Riding and Cindy Whife.**

***Peter A Riding***

**Chairman**

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**[www.swinitiative.org](http://www.swinitiative.org)**