

## New Guides for the City

by Chris Morgan



Chris Morgan and Keith Herrington are the Guides Trainers standing on the left of Mayor Joanne Brown. To her right are the new Guides, left to right, Clare Stacey, Marlene Kerton, Ken Morritt, Brendan McAnerney, Margaret Peacock, Ray Cayless, Robert Neal.

The smiling faces in the photograph belong to seven of the eight new guides who were presented with their badges and certificates by Mayor Joanne Brown at the Civic Suite on 23 January. The other new guide Sue Smith was unable to attend the ceremony.

It was a proud moment for everyone involved in the training process. Keith Herrington and I have trained and mentored many groups and our aim always is to make the trainees feel at ease, enjoy the practice sessions and never feel under any pressure. This year the trainees' enthusiasm was evident from the start and below I have shared a few things about their personalities, interests and styles plus some fascinating snippets they passed on to us.

Ray Cayless has a long held fascination for the history of Gloucester and captured our attention with his wealth of information, relaxed delivery and friendly smile. Marlene Kerton has an engaging personality and is a lively story teller. She reads widely and often revealed gems of historical fact, particularly about the Tudor period, whilst Brendan McAnerney's natural, relaxed style and deep knowledge of the Cathedral and other parts of the city impressed us all.

Ken Morritt relishes telling colourful stories that bring the city to life, interspersed with unusual facts, such as that the top of High Cross was the same height as the parapet of the present HSBC building. Robert Neal's infectious smile won everyone over and he often produced intriguing local information, especially about St John's Church Northgate, gained from his avid collection of facts.

Always speaking with quiet confidence, Margaret Peacock clearly loves our city and paints a vivid picture of its history,

pointing out aspects of buildings which might otherwise be overlooked. Clare Stacey doesn't live or work in the city so had fewer opportunities to practise. Despite this she showed herself to be a knowledgeable, fluid speaker and entertained everyone with some delightful touches of humour.

Finally Sue Smith has strong family connections with Gloucester, whose heritage she is keen to promote. She tells her stories in an enthusiastic, spirited fashion, once amazing us with her vivid description of how a ceiling partially collapsed whilst she was working in Ladybellegate House. We were relieved to hear there were no injuries!

We certainly have some well informed and passionate new guides, who have been rewarded for their hard work. We would like to extend our congratulations to them and wish them many years of successful tour guiding.



# Civic Trust News

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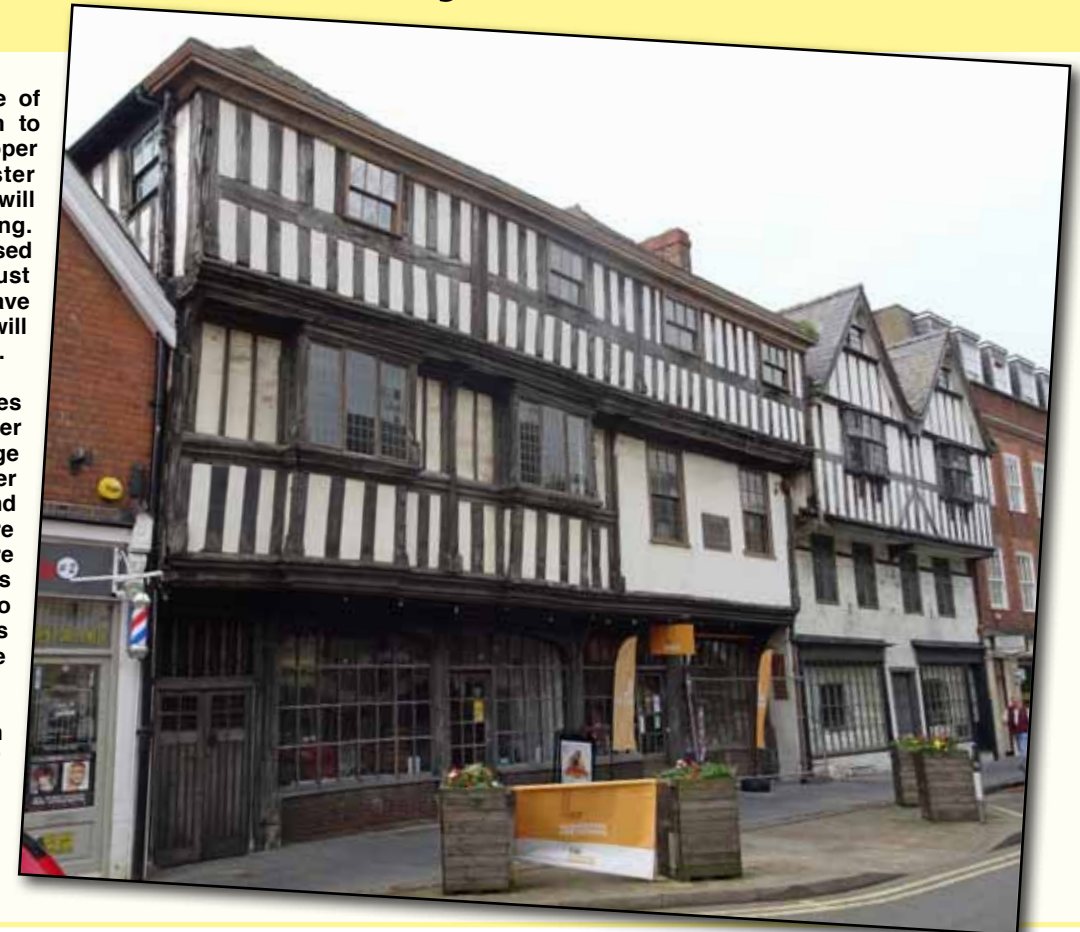
## SPECIAL EDITION

### Folk Museum/Bishop Hooper House and St Mary deCrypt Open on Saturday March 23rd!

On this page is a picture of the Former Folk Museum to be called "Bishop Hooper House" by Gloucester Historic Buildings who will shortly own the building. The building will be leased to Gloucester Civic Trust to run and as yet we have not agreed a name we will operate the building under.

However all four parties involved, The Gloucester City Council, The Heritage Lottery Fund, Gloucester Historic Buildings Trust and Gloucester Civic Trust are in agreement and we are just waiting for the various legal parties involved to draw up the documents so that we can exchange contracts.

Most importantly we plan to have an "Open Day" for all Trust members to visit the building on the 23rd March, more about this inside.



## Editors Letter

[newsletter@gloucestercivictrust.org](mailto:newsletter@gloucestercivictrust.org)



The other major event covered in this special edition is the opening of St Mary deCrypt after a major investment to upgrade it and equip it for a new future. St Mary deCrypt is widely known in the City as "The" Gloucester City Church, the place

we go to celebrate Gloucester Day (well apart from last year when it was closed!) The Trust used to open the Church with volunteers at the weekend and for many years this was organised by Trust member Eve Stuart Kelso. I was one of the people

Eve recruited and she was typical of the many people who have a great love for this special place. Please see a full report from the deCrypt team inside and come along over the weekend of the 23rd March to the Grand Opening.



Information and articles are always appreciated.  
Please contact Alex Bailey,  
Tel: 01452 840579 or e-mail [newsletter@gloucestercivictrust.org](mailto:newsletter@gloucestercivictrust.org)





# Members Open Day - Saturday 23rd March

Folk Museum, Gloucester Life Museum, Bishop Hooper House

Note front entrance will be closed, entry will be "around the back" via Quay Street



Emily Knight, dressed appropriately (!), and family at the event. Emily is a member of the Operations Team and will be at the Members Open Day.

## Plan to Open the Building

We have formed an initial "Operations Team" from members of the Council of Management to get the operation of the Building underway and we would like to be able to open in some way at Easter. To do this we need members to volunteer to help in many ways. So that you can see the opportunities that our new "home" will give the Operations Team together with the Communications group will be opening the Building from 10am to 4pm on Saturday 23rd March. The café will be open with complementary teas and coffees and tours of the whole building, including behind the scenes in parts that are normally locked. You will have the chance to talk about how you might be able to help or just come along and have a look around, meet with fellow members and enjoy a tea or coffee.

## The Name!

The City Council have called it the "Gloucester Life Museum" since it was overhauled with Lottery Fund money, Gloucester Historic Buildings who will own the Building have decided to call it "Bishop Hooper House". The people of Gloucester know it as the "Folk Museum" but what will the Civic Trust who will operate the building call it? We had thought that we could not call it a "Museum" without having a Curator and in essence we do not want to run a traditional Museum. However it seems that perhaps we will be able to keep the "Folk Museum" name if we so wished. What do you think? Let your Operations Team know. At the moment it is still "The Gloucester Life Museum" (GLM) and I will refer to it as that in this Newsletter.

## Running Costs of the Building

The Council currently charge for entry to the Gloucester Life Museum and this has resulted in most local people no longer visiting. The footfall is very low. We believe this Building belongs to the people of Gloucester and Gloucestershire and want as many of them as possible to visit and enjoy it. We plan to have free entry and so will need to cover the running costs in other ways. Once we have exchanged contracts, a Manager will be employed so will need to cover a salary plus running costs.

## Income Generation

We can see three main sources of income at the moment. The biggest should come from hiring out the Ed Shed followed by the Café and then voluntary donations. In time we also hope to receive some income from the Gloucestershire Arts and Crafts group using the buildings. We plan to have as many "Events" as possible to bring the place to life! At the last minute we agreed to open for the Gloucester Folk Trail and I will talk about the volunteering opportunities with the report on that event which follows.

## Gloucester Folk Trail at the Gloucester Life Museum (GLM)

Gloucester BID (Business Improvement District) generously sponsored this event and covered the costs of some of the entertainment. The day was a great success and below is a report on the various "elements" that made up the day (in no particular order).

## Story telling in the Victorian Classroom



## Café



Angela Price, who is Housekeeper at the GLM and set the Café up for us to use is shown with Philippa Zadeh who took charge from the beginning and guided the very successful first day of operation of the Café.



This shows the café and what a light pleasant space it is. In the summer users can sit in the gardens outside. It was also a pleasant spot to listen to the Folk Group led by our member Sarah Maidlow. This group has played several times at the Museum and in many ways is the "House Band"!!

LEFT: Chloe – Professional Storyteller entertaining the children (and adults!) with enthralling stories in the great setting of the Victorian schoolroom. The schoolroom will be open for visitors to see and will also continue to offer school visits where a "Victorian" school mistress is in charge! (School visits will continue to be run by the Council).

# Festival of Christmas Trees at St John's Church

by Chris Morgan



The Civic Trust was invited to take part in the Festival of Christmas Trees at St John's Church Northgate by the organiser and Civic Trust guide Jackie Pritchard. The theme I chose for our tree was historic Gloucester and the part played by our volunteers in promoting the history and heritage of our city.

Fellow guide Marlene Kerton and I worked together on ideas for the decorations and as she is a talented artist she painted some small pictures and created novel items to be placed on the tree. Another guide Maggie Goodchild contributed baubles containing images of city scenes and guide Paul Drinkwater gave us photos taken at the last Heritage Open Days which were placed inside clear glass baubles.

I cheekily included jolly robin redbreasts as an affectionate tribute to our Chairman Robin Morris.

13 organisations participated in the festival and visitors were invited to vote for their favourite. We were the fourth most popular with only 4 votes separating the top trees.

# Membership Matters

Sue Smith, Membership



While I have been away in New Zealand for a few months visiting family the membership admin. Team have been busy dealing with all the subscriptions which were due in January. Thank you very much Penny and Sandra for all your work on this.

Members may remember that I enclosed a letter with the last Newsletter in November, reminding everyone that subscriptions were due in January and asking those who paid by cheque to change over to a Standing Order. As we now have over 600 members we need to be as efficient as possible and streamline our systems. This is one way we can achieve that as it eliminates the need to send reminders when members forget to send in their subscription cheque.

Unfortunately my letter caused some confusion with a few members who were already paying by Standing Order completing a second form which resulted in two payments being taken by their bank. These extra payments have now been sorted out and I thank my membership team as well as our Treasurer, Nick Bishop, for dealing with this so efficiently in my absence.

All members who have paid their subscriptions by the end of February will be receiving their new membership card for 2019, either with this Newsletter or with the Annual Report which will be sent soon. We are still waiting for payments from some members and once this is received their membership card will be sent.

## VISITS

### Tuesday 9th April

The Heritage Hub in Alvin Street, either at 3pm or 7.30pm. Heather Forbes, who is one of our members, has offered these tours following a major refurbishment of their building, which holds the Archives for the whole County. If you would like to come please let us know which time you prefer and email [members@gloucestercivictrust.org](mailto:members@gloucestercivictrust.org) so we have an idea of numbers attending each session. If you are not on email then please just turn up on the day. There is no charge and we thank Heather for this opportunity to visit this wonderful facility.

### Wednesday 12th June, 2pm – 5pm.

#### Highnam Court

This will be our third visit with a special Tour of the House by Roger Head, the owner. Please see the form enclosed with this Newsletter with details of how to apply and methods of payment. Each year this is oversubscribed so act quickly if you want a place.

### Tuesday 9th July

A free Tour of Cirencester by a member of their local Civic Society at 6pm. Refreshments afterwards in a local pub. Email [members@gloucestercivictrust.org](mailto:members@gloucestercivictrust.org) to book a place.



Guided tours of the building itself could also be considered. A few DVD/Computer driven screens would be useful placed around the building, at the entrance for orientation and in the Cider House for example, nothing fancy at this stage. David Champion has collected the audio guides which are not being used at the moment and these could be brought into use.

Then there are events like the Apple Day/Week, Cotton Motorcycle Rally, Story Teller evenings for which we will need an Events Team to develop a programme.

Marketing is of course key so a website, facebook page etc will be needed.

Just initial thoughts, what ideas do you have? What would you like to see happen?

### Practical Matters!

We are fortunate to have a very fast internet connection to the building but could do with volunteers who have relevant skills to help with the setting up and maintenance of the systems. We need a WiFi system for visitors. The building itself is in great condition at the moment but some people with a practical

skills are required to help keep it that way and to make sure we are running the heating efficiently, doing the regulatory checks etc.

### Final Thoughts.

There is much to do and lots we can achieve. I will no doubt have missed many things. Everyone really can be part of this great venture in some way if they so wish. Our aim is to make the "Gloucester Life Museum" (whatever we call it) THE place visitors to the City have on their itinerary after the Cathedral. The place that Gloucestershire folk visit with their families on a regular basis.

## Ecclesiastical gives away £5,000 to charity from Christmas Carol Services



The Trust receives a tremendous amount of support from Ecclesiastical, not just financial as in this case, but they print and distribute the Newsletter for us and at the moment we hold our Council of Management meetings in their offices.

Four Gloucestershire charities, The Gloucester Civic Trust, St Rose's Trust, Caring for Communities and People (CCP) and the Salvation Army each received just over £1,225 from the firm which raised the funds from its annual Cathedral carol service.

A major employer in Gloucester, Ecclesiastical is no stranger to donating to good causes - it gives all its profits away to charity.

Mark Hews, Ecclesiastical group chief executive, paid tribute to everyone who had helped contribute to the total.

"All of these charities do wonderful work in Gloucestershire and we are delighted to be able to support them," said Mr Hews.

"As a commercial company owned by a charity, we are driven by giving and our annual carol concert at Gloucester Cathedral has allowed us to support so many local charities over the years and has become a key date for the city's festivities."

Over the years, the insurer has supported multiple projects with the Gloucester Civic Trust and the CCP.

Ecclesiastical Insurance Group plc is owned by Gloucester-headquartered All Churches Trust. All Ecclesiastical's profits go to the trust, which distributes them annually to good causes.

After giving more than £50m to charity in three years, in 2016 Ecclesiastical announced it aimed to raise £100m for good causes by the end of 2020. In August 2018, it revealed it had already raised £50million towards its target.

Last year the firm announced it would be leaving Gloucester city centre for a new headquarters in Brockworth - probably due to take place in 2020.



LEFT: Sarah's group playing in the area just outside the café.

Hiring out of the Ed Shed has to be our biggest source of income. The Operations Team are currently looking at how we can take over the booking and management of the rooms from the Council. Whatever system we come up with we are going to need an "ED Shed Team" to manage

the bookings (in conjunction with the Manager once we have one) to:

- ♦ Open and close the building and make sure hirers have what they need
- ♦ Develop the "marketing materials"
- ♦ Collect the payments!

The first team of volunteers to be created will be the "Meet and Greeters" to bring people in and guide them as to what's on offer. In time we will develop a guide leaflet for visitors (another thing that volunteers can work on). As we need the café to generate income for our operation, we would like to have volunteers to man it. A Café Team would seem the best way to get the café up and running.

The gardens are laid out as a Tudor Garden and could do with some loving care and attention so that they can be used for picnics and an outdoor extension to the café. They are an attractive feature but require a Garden Team of green fingered people.

### Ed Shed



This picture shows the exterior view of the Ed Shed, a very well equipped modern building. The shape of the window on the upper storey makes it a very light room. On the lower floor room there are full width sliding doors enabling the whole front to be opened. This is the way it was used during the Folk trail as the next below shows.

### Re-enactors



ABOVE: Waites from Bristol playing music and looking very much at home in the Tudor building. Our own Rob Scott arranged for them to play for us.

RIGHT: Rag Rug making and Barge Painting among other crafts on the ground floor of the Ed Shed.



Our member Rob Scott wore his Tudor clothing and brought his Troupe along this time. They looked very much at home in the building!

BELOW: Rob Scott (with the drum) took the Waites into the centre of Gloucester to "drum" up support for the event! Barry Hazard carried our banner



BELOW: Jon Eeles who runs a facebook group about the Civil War period and takes groups on tours of Gloucester popped in with his friend Aron Jordan in full fighting gear!

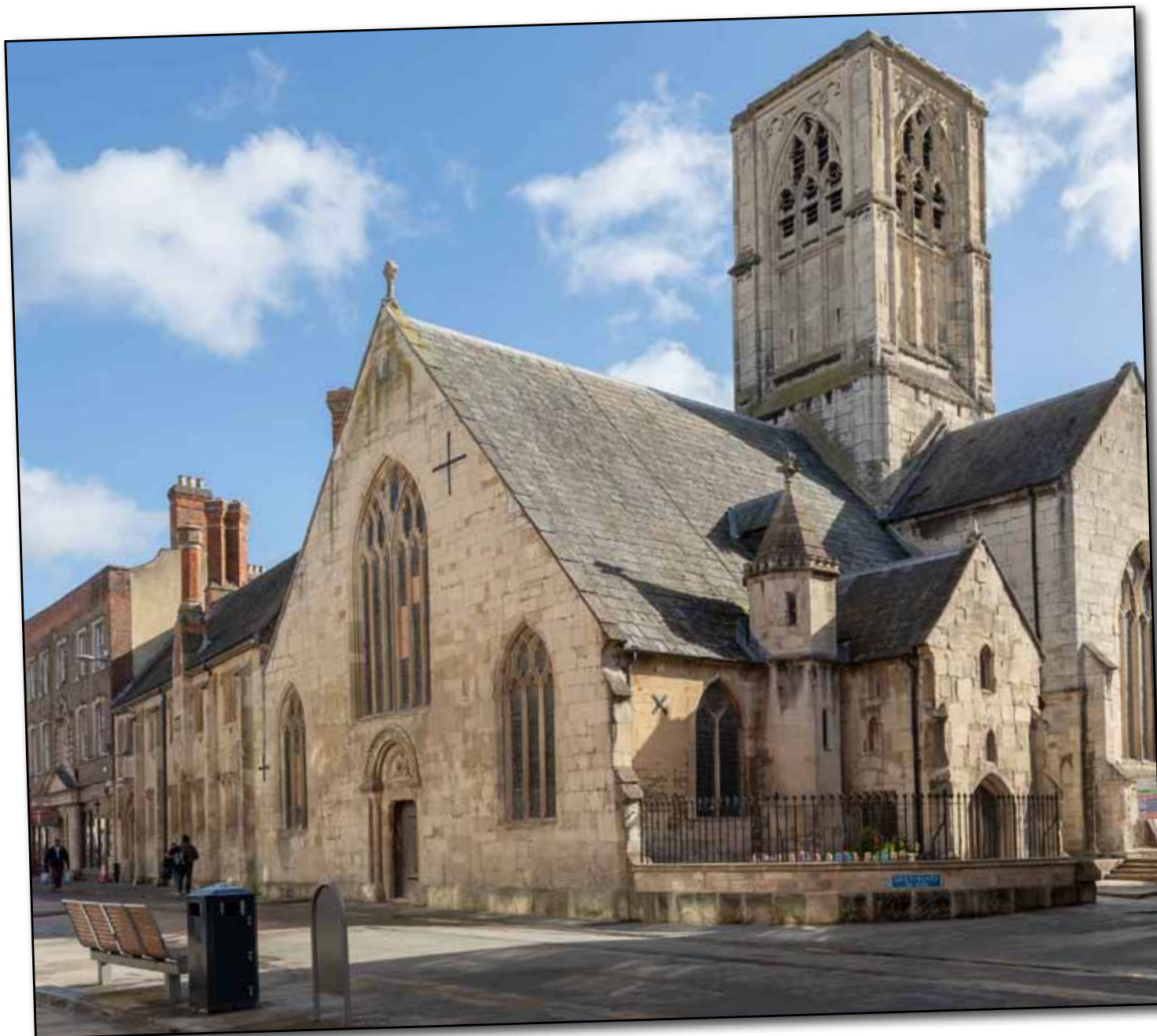


### Other areas that need developing

As well as the teams already mentioned there are a number of areas for development on which we need to have people working. We would like to develop a Civil War display using items from the City Museum Collection. They have said they are keen to work with us on this. More information for visitors on the history of the building itself and the various uses it has had over the years is needed. We would like to have some printed guides to give to visitors and also information displays around the building (perhaps our guides group could do this?).



## Discover DeCrypt reopens: More for Heritage Visitors, More for Community



◆ ABOVE: Exterior of St Mary de Crypt Church.

Following the opening service on Friday 22nd March we will be holding a day of celebration on Saturday 23rd March from 10am until 4pm, open to all. There will be various community and student groups providing music, free art and craft activities for children and adults, a chance to try out our new coffee machine and of course guided tours of the buildings. In the Schoolroom we will have storytelling and performance poetry throughout the day, all free. So do come and see what we have to offer!

On the 23rd March Discover DeCrypt will be open again to the public and we will soon be welcoming back heritage visitors, local families, school parties, US tour groups and of course members of the parish and of the local community to enjoy the new spaces.

So what has changed? On entering the church you will find a magnificent open space, reflecting the church as it was after it's rebuilding in the 1400s, only warmer and with modern lighting.

The newly uncovered ledger stones will be incorporated into a floor of stone flags across the nave and aisles.

The Raikes Chapel will look much the same; this is now a space reserved for prayer and reflection with services planned every Friday lunchtime.

In the north-west corner, near the entrance to the schoolroom, you'll find the lift, stairs and toilets, clad in limed oak.

In this beautiful open space over the next year we will have drama from Tiger Productions and Gloucestershire University students; music from Gloucester Community Choir, Three Choirs Festival and local professionals as part of the Gloucester Classical Music Festival, as well as our own series of inclusive concerts.

There will be our Schools Poetry Slam, dinners and conferences, including our Festival of Death and Life. We will be hosting art workshops, talks and exhibitions during the Christian Arts Festival, Art in the City and the Gloucester History Festival.

For heritage visitors, there will be new ways to find out about the history of the buildings. You can pick up a talking pen and follow the Rose Petal Trail finding out fun and quirky bits of information all over the buildings.

Soon after opening you will be able to download an app for a virtual tour, including 'twirls' of the crypt and bell tower. Those who prefer a more traditional approach will be able to buy a guide book or, best of all, ask a volunteer guide. What would we do without the expertise of members of the Civic Trust!

One of the biggest changes is that both schoolrooms are now open to the public

once again. Equipped with tables, chairs and projectors, we have bookings there for meetings and training.

Upstairs is also equipped as an art room; there are large tables, easels, storage for materials, including a plan chest for paper, and access to the adjoining refurbished kitchen.

We will be running our own art activities there, offering full-day art workshops once a month, and using it for toddlers' messy play and a school holiday club. Above all the buildings are here to be used by the local community, all parts of the community. These accessible spaces will be used by charities such as Artshape, Mindsong and Inclusion Gloucestershire.

Downstairs the panelling has been beautifully restored and we have created a 'Tudor' corner - not exactly a replica schoolroom, but an area where visitors can see and handle the sort of objects you might have found in the schoolroom when it first opened.

Free family and schools packs will provide helpful information, but there's nothing like learning by doing. There will be quill pens and ink-making materials to try, hornbooks, candles, a birch rod and school books (sadly not Tudor books - our budget didn't stretch quite that far), but there will also be some more unusual items - pounce bags, a plummet, a clay pipe and a piss-pot. To find out more you'll have to visit!

At the other end of the room you'll find a good-quality coffee machine and visitors will be able to help themselves to coffee and tea and stay to chat with friends or take a break from shopping.

There will be books for both adults and children, and for children a cosy 'reading den' as well as toys and games. Storytelling is the theme for this room, and indeed underlies the approach to interpretation throughout the building. An activity table will give both adults and children an opportunity to explore their creativity using the materials on offer to tell stories in different ways.

The opening on 22 March is a landmark in the life of this project, but a landmark that points to the road ahead. There will be much more to come.



◆ ABOVE: Travelling pulpit inside St Mary de Crypt Church.

◆ RIGHT: App download point inside St Mary de Crypt Church.