

This report will be made
Public on 18 November 2022

Hythe Town Council

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Report number **F&GP/23/22**

To Hythe Town Council
Date **10 November 2022**
Status **Non-Exempt**
Responsible officer **Town Clerk**

Subject **RED LION SQUARE WATER FOUNTAIN REPORT
F&GP/23/22**

SUMMARY: This report gives an update on the Red Lion Square Water Fountain reinstatement and recommends that the Committee reviews in accordance with best practice.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION:

The Committee is asked to agree the recommendations set out below because; -

- a) The Council is committed to control and manage its financial affairs in accordance with The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) guidelines.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To receive and note the report F&GP/23/22.
2. To recommend to full council to appoint a contractor A or B and support the cost from CIL reserves towards the reinstatement of the water fountain at Red Lion Square.
3. To recommend that Hythe Town Council take on the running costs, water rates, and any future maintenance costs.

INTRODUCTION

In April 2021, the Town Clerk enquired with Hythe Civic Society as to whether there was any history on the Red Lion Square Water Fountain.

After a brief meeting with a member of the Civic Society and a group of interested parties the below was discovered:

The drinking fountain

In 1886, Thomas Judge, Hythe's Town Mayor, and a respected local businessman, donated the drinking fountain to the people of Hythe. Originally, it was installed in the wall of Dr Fagge's house, next to the Town Hall in the High Street but, when the

house was pulled down to make way for a new bank, it was relocated in the wall of what was then the Mackeson Brewery in Red Lion Square.

During the 70s, it was the job of Hythe's Environmental Health Officer to test the water annually and it was always found to be satisfactory. The metal cup which was once attached was removed for hygiene reasons in 1965. The brewery was demolished in 1975 but the drinking fountain has remained in the wall ever since. It is hoped that one day it might, once again, provide liquid refreshment.

(Rayner and Hythe Civic Society, 1996)

As it is now situated in the wall of Mackeson Court which is one of Folkestone and Hythe District Council's (FHDC) Independent Living Schemes, the Town Clerk then contacted FHDC and was directed to FHDC's Neighbourhood Surveyors to ascertain if the wall is safe and there are no other issues. Also, as to whether an 'easement' was applicable too.

The Surveyors were asked to inspect the water fountain and they put their observations down on paper and have forwarded to Senior Management at FHDC.

Their recommendations contained in the report are as follows: -

Future Considerations / Recommendations.

Summing up the above facts, I'm mindful to accept the comments from Hythe Town Council at face value.

Therefore, I have no concerns with the fountain being put back into use, as long as Hythe Town Council take all responsibility for water quality and future maintenance.

F&HDC may wish to draw up a service level agreement or easement, but it is felt this is not essential at this time.

However, from inspection on site, the liner drainage channel crossing the public footpath appears blocked and this should be kept clear to prevent the pavement becoming slippery at this point, with algae or ice in the colder months.

It has been suggested that Hythe Town Council and FHDC may want to draw up an SLA or an official easement, as they could find no formal paperwork to allow the fountain to be placed in the external boundary wall of Mackeson Court.

Affinity Water has been contacted regarding reconnection and are on standby.

The goals of the working group, that was formed by Hythe Town Council's Councillor Wade, discussed the repaint and reconnection of the water supply. Stephen Bailey Landscapes has offered to organise the refurbishment as a community project, involving the local schools, but has asked Hythe Town Council to agree to take responsibility for the running costs which are estimated at £50-£100 per annum. The working group estimate the total full cost of the project to total around £1,500. This has now increased due to material costs.

Listed works to be done:

- Vapor blast all old paint from cast iron work
- Re-paint fountain as per restoration in 2000
- Remove all existing copper pipe work concealed within render on the back of the fountain
- Install a new 22mm blue water pipe down back of fountain, under rag stone wall and connect to existing stop cock in footpath
- Install external isolation tap at rear of fountain
- Install new push tap faucet
- Clear out drainage channel
- Install 75mm drainage pipe from fountain to drain to prevent gully clogging

About the Contractors and Quote Price

Contractor A - £ 2,190 plus vat

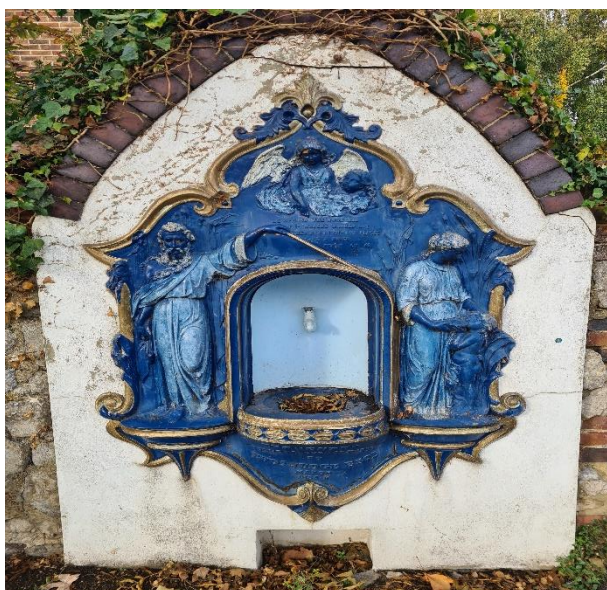
This Hythe based contractor, undertakes works such as landscaping clearance, garden maintenance, driveways, decking, fencing, water features tree surgery, turfing and other bespoke projects.

Contractor B - £4,296 plus vat

Carries out maintenance, refurbishment, alteration, and new build projects throughout Kent. Directly employ all trades and operate a Building Department and a Painting Department.

Contractor C – declined the works

Contractor D – declined the works



SUMMARY

In these times when we are trying to reduce our consumption of plastics, the reinstatement of drinking water from the fountain for use by the people of Hythe would support the Council's aim to work against climate change. It would also provide access to drinking water to homeless people and to those with pets.

The committee are asked if they would recommend contributing the agreed funds from the CIL reserves to aid the refurbishment and recommend to council to take on the running costs (water rates approx. £50-100 per annum and future maintenance costs) should they be minded.

RISK MANAGEMENT

A summary of the perceived risk follows.

Perceived Risk Council does not refurbish the water fountain in red lion square and the fountain remains unused.

Risk Low

Likelihood Low

Preventative Action To commence the refurbishment using CIL monies so that the public have access to clean drinking water.

CONTACT OFFICER

If you have any queries about this report, please contact The Town Clerk and the Responsible Financial Officer of the Council

Tel: 01303 266152 or email clerk@hythe-tc.gov.uk prior to the meeting.

Bibliography

Rayner, D., and Hythe Civic Society (1996). The town hall of Hythe: one of the Cinque ports. Hythe: Hythe Civic Society.