

Glastonbury Conservation Society

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Friends of St Edmunds Well

The Society has assisted The Friends of St Edmunds Well in their successful bid to buy a plot of land on Windmill Hill for posterity. The plot that was once owned by the late Wilf Peddle, (the Eggman), who many will remember making deliveries in his distinctive vintage van, came on the market late last year, being offered up for auction.

The goal of the group of local residents is to protect and restore a cherished piece of land off Selwood Road that holds unique significance for the town:

It is home to St. Edmund's Well, a sacred local landmark, and includes surviving remnants of historic apple orchards, connecting us to Glastonbury's centuries-old apple-growing traditions.

The group's vision was to purchase and safeguard the land, transforming it into:

- A memorial orchard planted with heritage apple and fruit varieties.
- A sanctuary for wildlife and biodiversity.
- A place of community connection, learning, and wellbeing.

By protecting this land from inappropriate development, the group aims to create a living legacy that honours the natural, cultural, and agricultural heritage of Glastonbury.



They intend to restore the orchard, preserve the remaining heritage trees, plant new trees dedicated to local milestones (eg births, weddings, lives of loved ones), promote local food resilience with seasonal fruit harvests, protect the ecosystem, conserve St. Edmund's Well and its watershed.

Enough money was raised to make a successful bid on Sept 25 2025 so Wilf's field is now secured for future generations. When the land registration is complete, the project to create a memorial orchard will begin.

The campaign group wishes to extend a heartfelt thanks to all of the 219 supporters, including The Conservation Society who helped finance the bid.



Westward view

Another bench has been installed by the society, this one on Wearyal Hill close to the gate affording access from Hillhead. The plaque remembers Glastonians Algie Charles Stanley James 1896 –1983, and his daughter Maurene Chivers Luckes 1924 – 2005.

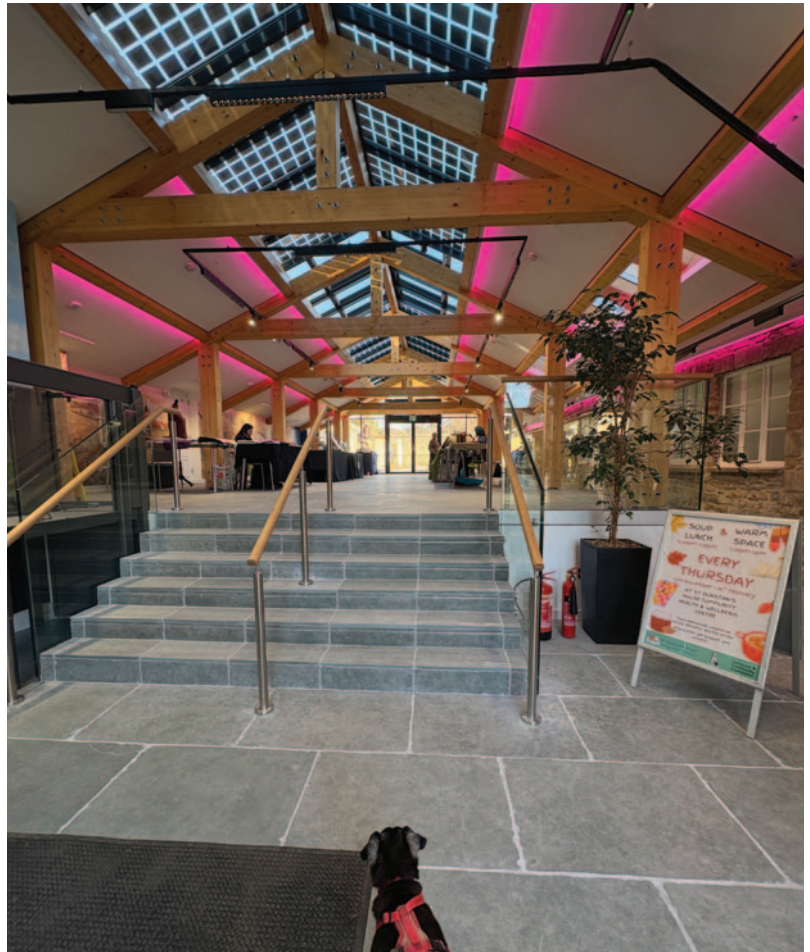
Pictured after completing the installation, left to right: Pete Francis, Alderman Ian Tucker, Stuart Marsh. Picture: Adrian Pearse, CONSOC Chairman.

The bench has been sited to offer a great view, especially at sunset looking westwards across the town and the levels toward the Mendips. The steel bench was one of the last manufactured by the late Steve Bannel of Bannell Engineering on the Beckery, the site of which lies in the foreground of the view when sitting on the bench.

The atrium project completes

The atrium project that has been funded under the Town Deal, connects the Town Hall, visible on the right of this picture with the refurbished St Dunstons House on the left. This picture is taken from the rear of the Town Hall looking toward Magdalene St.

The atrium provides a light space to accommodate more events, taking pressure off the over subscribed Town Hall. Built to meet modern environmental expectations, it features solar panels and a heat pump to provide lighting and warmth with low impact that will assist the town's commitment to move toward net zero ambitions.



Who can enlighten us?

Who can tell us anything about the photograph below that depicts a crowd in Northload Street? Likewise the items pictured left. The text, 'not made by slaves' on the top item would suggest a time when slavery was frowned on and the manufacturer wished to clarify a company policy. A forerunner of the term, 'sustainably produced.' Thanks to David Taylor for bringing these historic items to a Society meeting.



Glastonbury Past and Present



This gem of a picture is from the 1922 film by Alice Buckton, 'Glastonbury Past and Present'. It's a silent film, a characteristic that adds to its technically simple historic appeal. Lasting about an hour it is free to view on line. It's wonderful. <https://player.bfi.org.uk/free/film/watch-glastonbury-past-and-present-1922-online>

*Text from the website:
In the shadow of the Glastonbury*

Tor, locals re-enact their town's history: from the early Mendip encampments, through King Alfred's defeat of the Danes, to a more contemporary staging of the Michaelmas Fair. The film was the brainchild of writer and teacher Alice Buckton (1867-1944) who was devoted to preserving the region's rich historic legacy. Look out for her in the opening shots.

Alice Buckton was one of the founding members of the 'New

Avalonians', a movement that emerged in the 1920s to research, preserve and celebrate Glastonbury's rich past. Other members included writer and spiritualist Wellesley Tudor Pole (grandfather of punk singer and actor Edward Tudor Pole).

A contemporary article in The Times described the ambitious Glastonbury Past and Present as "the first film record of the history of a British town".



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A chapel near the Bailys building which disappeared in a less enlightened age when lower value was placed on old buildings



Photo courtesy of the Somerset Leveller – known faces – far left Adrian Pearse, Chair of the Society, fourth from left Stewart fifth from left, Alderman Ian Tucker, Coucillor Paul Manning, front row with beard and shovel, Glastonbury Mayor Michael White, to his right, Dr lynne Sedgemore CBE and in front of her Liz Leyshon from Somerset County Council

The Bailys Buildings project is perhaps the most ambitious of the 12 projects being financed by the Town Deal Fund of £23.6m, with £6.3m of that total committed to it.

The purpose of the project is to accomodate local businesses, educational groups and community activities. The Grade II listed buildings have, during a long period of dereliction, become home to nine different species of bat and a number of nesting birds. Ecological surveys were conducted to assess the buildings' ecological value before work could begin. To minimise disturbance to the creatures which included rare Horseshoe Bats temporary bat roosts have been created while over 50 trees or hedge plantings have been made on one side of

the building currently being renovated. Members of the Society were involved in the planting operations and began watering when the drought of 2025 threatened the plantings. This was very labour intensive however as it involved bucketing water from the Mill Stream that progressively dried up. Fortunately the building contractors offered to use mains water hosepipes to rescue the situation.

Ian Tucker, who is Chair of the Beckery Island Regeneration Trust (BIRT) expressed his gratitude to everyone who came along to help with the planting, with particular thanks to the Conservation Society which financed all the plants. The renovation of Building West is now well underway.

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Beneath your feet

In appreciating the town we live in it can often be enlightening to look up but conversely looking down can reveal some interesting features with a story. This yellow plastic conversely on an old iron structure that used to be used to afford access to a basement below what is now the High St cafe My Fine Deli. The Society has offered modest funds to restore the original iron work to advertise the historical significance of this feature from Glastonbury's past. More on this when the work is completed, hopefully later this year.

