

NAUNTON DOVECOTE TRUST

ANNUAL REPORT TO NAUNTON PARISH COUNCIL

We are pleased to report that we have completed the first phase of our improvements at the Dovecote, i.e. (a) repairing the turbine house as a ruin, including refurbishing and reinstating the turbine machinery; (b) routine maintenance repairs to the Dovecote building itself, to include partial re-pointing, roof repairs and repairs to stonework; and (c) removal of asbestos roof from the lean-to and replacing with Welsh slate as per early photographs and repairing the wall on the south side, facing the river, which was in a dilapidated state.

In addition to the above repairs, we took the opportunity to excavate out the leat above the turbine house and the leat (head-race) above the lean to (both of which are now open to view). In addition, we did excavate the floor inside the lean-to, which formerly contained a small water-mill, along the supposed route of the water channel, but there were no remaining features of interest so this hole has been filled in.

The work was completed within budget at a cost of approximately £80,000 including architect's and specialists' fees and V.A.T. The money was raised from reserves (£40,000), specific donations and a Grant of £10,000 from the Pilgrim Trust.

We are very grateful to our Trustee Stuart Corbyn for overseeing this project with our architect and builder and count ourselves fortunate to have someone with such extensive experience in renovating historic buildings to help us.

The next part of our project is to place a working model of a turbine, such as the one we have in the turbine shed, into the lean-to so that visitors can see how such a mechanism worked. We are working with a design engineer to find the best way to do this.

We are also seeking to find the most cost-effective means of bringing mains water to Unit 4 of the stable block (nearest the donation box) and the provision of a disabled W.C. and simple kitchen facility. It is felt that these facilities would make community use of the Dovecote site more manageable if they could be achieved at a reasonable cost.

We are very grateful to Gill and Peter Bell for maintaining the grass at the Dovecote site. This is carried out in a manner designed to look neat and cared for whilst retaining a basically 'agricultural' feel to the whole site. We also leave an unmown margin by the river bank to encourage growth of wild flowers and natural vegetation. We are advised that this margin provides a suitable environment for invertebrates, which in turn provide a food source for the kingfishers, dippers and other birdlife which we love to see there. This has paid off in recent years as we have several new species of wild flower flourishing along the river bank.

Our finances are sound, our current reserves standing at approximately £25,000. We are grateful to be supported by approximately 90 'Friends' of the Naunton Dovecote Trust who come both from within and outside the village. Our newsletter 'Dovetales' keeps these people in touch with our activities and is also distributed to anyone we feel has an interest in the Dovecote.

P.A. Hanks 20 05 19